



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 32 – Number 2

June 2014

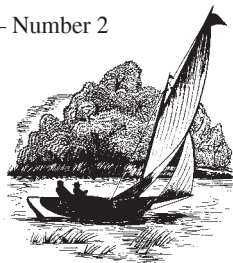
**Special Features This Issue**  
The Gray Silence – *Rosie Parks Floats*  
Adventures in Greenland Paddling  
Skipjack – *Dorade*



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Editor and Publisher: Bob Hicks  
Magazine production: Roberta Freeman  
For subscription or circulation inquiries or problems, contact:

**Jane Hicks at**  
**maib.office@gmail.com**



## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

This issue is perhaps a bit over the top on stories of adventuring afloat in the far north. Dick Winslow's story of rafting a remote Alaskan river on the North Slope to the shores of the Arctic Ocean leads off, followed by Gail Ferris' ongoing report on her kayaking in northern Greenland amongst the icebergs. And on the Book Reviews pages I enthusiastically urge readers interested in that sort of thing to read a two volume set of books all about one man's summer vacations spent canoeing the wild rivers in Hudson Bay country in the 1930s.

Fascination with the almost inaccessible far north seems to attract a certain segment of the adventurous public. I have always been attracted to that desolate part of our globe, albeit in an armchair mode, voluminous reading about the heroic days of Arctic (and Antarctic, also) exploration. Despite all this reading I've never been any further north than Cape Breton in Nova Scotia and the Haliburton Highlands north of Toronto and now it is too late. Much as I'd like to take a look around Hudson's Bay country, or the Alaskan North Slope, it ain't gonna happen.

What is there about those essentially empty, barren and climate unfriendly places that appeals to some, including me? For me it has always been the sense that being there would be being really OUT THERE where we collectively have not yet overwhelmed nature with our onslaught. It's so unappealing to most that it has been relatively left alone. Yes, today our encroaching search for energy is despoiling more and more of it and our civilization has pretty well imposed itself on the native cultures, Indian and Inuit, turning their latest generations into wanna bees lusting after our consumerism and its multitude of distractions. But the far north remains pretty much empty of humans and their paraphernalia. Lotsa room to be alone if one so chooses, but not easy to get to and survive in.

Small boat types who find the far north attractive are almost always canoeists, for canoes have always been the preferred mode of travel, the myriad streams, rivers and lakes being the only way to get around. Even today with railroads and some roads reaching out to locations with some sort of special appeal,

and float planes to make quantum leaps from place to place, canoes are what work best

Canoes were, like many of our vehicles once were, used for work, lugging stuff to where it was needed. Still, today, big canoes, reaching back to the original natives and adopted by the French fur trappers, carry on as freighter canoes still lugging stuff. But most canoeing that now goes on in that far north is recreational, enjoyed by folks from down here with enough time and money to get up there with their gear and go paddling exciting challenging rivers, in the short summer, more often than not with experienced local guides.

Now these guides are the folks who REALLY do love that country. Always outstanding in my mind are Alexandra and Garrett Conover of Northwoods Ways ([www.northwoodsways.com](http://www.northwoodsways.com)), who came to my attention back around 1987 at the then L.L. Bean Canoe Symposium in Maine. When I learned that they not only conducted guided trips in the remote Maine north woods (not really the far north but a nearby approximation) but wintered over in a wall tent on their own property in the Maine woods, I was impressed. And when I heard about their mid winter sledging trip along a frozen Labrador river man hauling (that's the term for it, even though Alexandra did her own hauling) all their needs for several weeks on sledges alone without outside contact of any sort, I was truly blown away. Listening to the part where they told of getting off the Labrador train way out in the wilderness with their stuff and watching it disappear into the night, I thought that perhaps that was further than I'd ever care to adventure in that cold emptiness!

Why I never did follow through on my fascination with that country, no doubt best experienced with guides, is testimony to my foot dragging all through my life about tackling the next big thing while still entangled in the present one. I just never did make the time (nor money enough) to do so. There have been several big things in my life since I walked away from the workaday world in 1959, more than enough to keep me happily involved in a rewarding life.

## In This Issue...

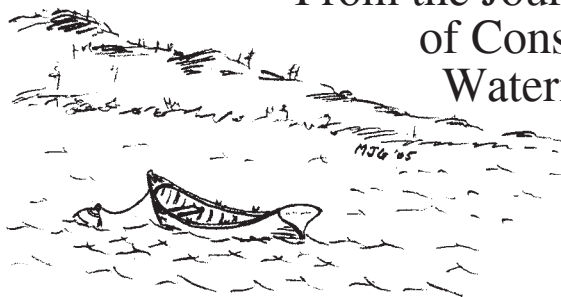
- 2 Commentary
- 3 From the Journals of Constant Waterman
- 4 A Gifted Scale Model Schooner Heads South
- 5 Foot Long Monohull Called "Footy"
- 6 You write to use about...
- 8 Book Reviews
- 10 A Moveable Messabout - Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington
- 11 The Salty Bard
- 12 The Gray Silence
- 18 Adventures in Greenland Paddling: Part 4
- 21 *Dinghy Cruising*: Lost and Found
- 27 *Winnie Estelle* Joins CBMM's Floating Fleet
- 28 25 Years Ago in MAIB: The Launching of the "Effie M. Morrissey, Jr."
- 30 *Rosie Parks* Floats
- 34 Letter from *Presto!* #2
- 35 Mainsheet: Reports of Interest from the Delaware River Chapter TSCA
- 38 From the Tiki Hut
- 41 The Robertson Project
- 42 The Melonseed Project (continued)
- 44 More on Motor Whaleboats
- 45 The Apprenticeship
- 46 Bolger & Friends on Design: More Preliminary Studies for Champlain 28: Part 5 of More Than 5!
- 49 Baggywrinkle: Paddling a Harp
- 50 *Dorade*
- 51 Ships That Pass
- 52 From the Lee Rail
- 53 Trade Directory
- 58 Classified Marketplace
- 59 Shiver Me Timbers

2 – Messing About in Boats, June 2014

## On the Cover...

Next stop, the Arctic Ocean. Dick Winslow and friends head out into "The Gray Silence" of the Alaskan North Slope on the remote Canning River headed for the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Dick tells us all about his adventure starting on page 12.

## From the Journals of Constant Waterman



By Matthew Goldman  
Constantwaterman.com

I walked into the offices of our local paper yesterday, my new book clutched in my hand, to enquire about the article I presumed they would write about me. The editor in chief, whom I sought, was on vacation. Who ever heard of a newspaperman on vacation? Probably just following up a hot lead in the Bahamas.

I met the features editor, who kindly relieved me of the weight of my book and hid it among the papers on her desk. She took down *MoonWind*'s vital statistics, then asked me whether I had a picture of myself they could utilize in the paper.

"Well," I said. "There's a great one of me playing in the sawdust hill out by the portable sawmill on our upper forty back in '52."

"Maybe something more recent," she suggested. "Maybe something with boats in it. Or water."

"Oh," I answered. "Water. How 'bout the one of me bare-assed-naked, leaping from the rope swing over the swimming hole up behind Rich Island?"

"Well," she said. "I thought maybe something..."

"I have a snapshot of a dinghy I used to own," I said. "You could maybe splice them together: have me leaping off the swing into the dinghy." She gave me one of those looks. The same look my wife gives me when she can't understand why they didn't drown me as a puppy.

The features editor stepped into the next office and returned with a lovely young woman. That's a trick I've been meaning to learn these past twenty years or so. Every time I step into the office next to mine, all I find is another desk piled with overdue bills. "This is our photographer," she said.

"Where would you like me to take your picture?" this young woman asked.

"How 'bout aboard my sailboat?" I quipped.

"Fine," she said. "I'll meet you on your boat at half past eight."

"It'll be a bit dark," I said.

"Half past eight tomorrow morning," she said.

As soon as I returned to Noank, I turned to. At our marina I went to the office and explained my dilemma. "I need to borrow a slip for just one night," I said. They kindly found me a slip. I paddled my yellow kayak out to *MoonWind* on her mooring.

I dragged the kayak aboard and started my motor; put out fenders, rigged some dock lines, and practiced waving my boathook. I motored into the slip and went to work. By the time I finished scrubbing *MoonWind* and wrestling with the hose, I was nearly as clean as she was, and probably wetter.

This morning I rose at five o'clock, dosed myself with coffee, and limited my computer time to two hours. Though suffering severe computer withdrawal symptoms, I hastened to the boatyard and polished my mooring lines. At half past eight, I met the photographer in front of the Seahorse Restaurant. The next half hour, I posed in a sailorly fashion aboard my boat and listened to my companion swear at her camera.

I have to admit I was disappointed: I learned only one new word. She has the swearing down pat. Once she learns nautical jargon, she'll be able to pass for an old salt at the Seahorse. She's presently an avid sailboarder. I enjoy watching sailboards zip about the sound, but I always thought that spending a weekend aboard one might have its drawbacks.

After her departure, I filled my fuel and water tanks, and brought my smaller genoa ashore to have it mended. I taped up the tear in my mast boot and checked the oil in my outboard. Then I motored back to the mooring field. West Cove dimpled. The breeze blew a gentle six knots. The sun smiled down as I kayaked back to the pier. The rest of this beautiful day, I buffed a customer's sailboat and thought of reasons to skip work and go off sailing.

## If we could have built our new website from curly maple, we would have.

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# A Gifted Scale Model Schooner Heads South

By Mark Steele



I still cannot believe that this wonderful model is mine thanks to her builder Lloyd Johnson.



Running Tide on her maiden run on the first decent New Zealand winter day.

Now and again in one's life some of us experience acts of extreme kindness and, occasionally, equally extreme generosity from persons that we have never actually met.

So it was when one early winter murky afternoon in our home in Auckland, New Zealand, this publisher/editor of humble, model sailboat magazine received a telephone call from a reader never met, Lloyd Johnson of Costa Mesa, California, to say that a model pinky schooner that he had built, and which I had raved about in the then current issue of my *Windling World*, was on the way to me by international air freight as a gift.

A super keen model yachtsman and builder of fine models, Lloyd "Swede" Johnson has been a reader, and indeed a wonderful supporter of my magazine, for eight of the nine years that it has been appearing. Although we have never met we had talked on the phone several times and he and his sailing models have been featured from time to time. Nonetheless, in this day and age where air freight costs an absolute fortune, particularly on something of this nature, it is far outside the parameters of ordinary kindness. That, however, appears to be the kind of person that "Swede" Johnson happens to be, and to merely say that I was taken by surprise at the news would be an understatement. I was utterly gob smacked!

The pinky schooner is said to have originated in Europe as far back as the 1600s and received the name from its distinctive, but unusual, uplifted or "pinked" stern design. I have renamed the schooner *Running Tide* and there is some connection I have noticed in that the original schooner built at Milbridge in Maine was called *Glad Tidings*, so there is a bit of "tide" in her somewhere. The notes on her plans make mention of the fact that she had sailed well, was very stiff, but had an easy motion. She had also required 11,250 lbs. of ballast.

The winter weather in New Zealand has been far from pleasant (other than the odd bright and freezing cold days often difficult to pick) so *Running Tide* has had several weeks on the hard in a passage way within our house awaiting the relaunch which will be preceded by the opening of a bottle of wine... to ward off any ugly sea serpents, as well as to attract the most beautiful of Antipodean mermaids, of course.

The measurements of the model are: hull length 100cm (she's quite a big girl), with a nice broad 27cm beam (those are personal to a lady!), bowsprit 40cm, length overall 146cm. With no keel and all of her weight inside the hull, the schooner is heavy but liftable by the masts... just!

An editor must be careful (I have learnt) not to wax too lyrical about another man's boat, certainly never about another man's wife. Holy macaroni, the consequences of the latter... well, they could be utterly embarrassing, and that is putting it mildly!

## In Memoriam: Mark Steele

Just before we wrapped up this issue we received word that our longtime "friend never met," New Zealander Mark Steele had passed away. Over the past 16 years Mark had contributed over 40 articles to our pages on his favorite form of messing about in boats, building and sailing model boats.

Mark first came to our attention with the following letter in the June 1998 issue:

### Model Sailing Popular

Sailing of model sailing craft is very popular in New Zealand with increasing interest in classic looking schooners, ketches and sloops. Here in Auckland we have a fleet from the Quiet Little Windle Club which enjoys leisurely ambles at Onepoto Lake, which is a part seawater, part freshwater sailing venue for models. "Windling" is a term created to differentiate the use of model sailing vessels for fun and relaxation, as opposed to those who race seriously in Marblehead and One Metre Classes.

Mark Steele, Auckland, NZ

At that time Mark was publishing his own modest journal about "windling," *Windling World*, which circulated worldwide amongst those who shared his passion from 1996 until about two years ago when increasing international postal costs made it unaffordable for him to continue this labor of love. From that base he expanded to our pages and more recently to the online *Duckworks Magazine* and the Vintage Model Yacht Association's *Model Yachting*.

That his efforts were appreciated is testified by the article on this page about the gift model pinky schooner sent to him by a loyal reader of *Windling World*. And on the facing page is Mark's report on his creation of a new model class he whimsically chose to call "Footies," models limited to no more than 12" length. Mark had that whimsical way about him, taking much pleasure from the simpler ways to enjoy life. This attracted to him many "friends never met" worldwide and I very much value having been included amongst them.





Three of Richard Webb's 12" models in the UK which inspired my Footy idea.

What started me thinking, was Englishman Richard Webb's 12" sailing model yachts, and their races in a plastic lined pool on the sands of Weymouth in the United Kingdom, a story that I picked up, contacted the builder and used in the April issue of my own model yachting publication, *Windling World*®.

Even earlier than that, I had merely mentioned it in the previous issue, and this had resulted in a flurry of building activity among our own Ancient Mariners' fleet, heightened by my announcement of a rather long fun race for such boats, down a long and at times narrow feeder canal, into a smaller pond and then into the larger pond used by our group, a race to be held annually on the first Thursday of April.

With an absolute minimum of rules, only that boats were to be monohulled with a deck measurement not exceeding one foot in length, and be controlled by radio, the New Zealand Footy Class was born. Their emergence makes several statements I think, firstly that model yachting is perhaps coming of age whereby grown men have shed any inhibitions they might have had about being too old to build, and then play around with, model boats in a public arena, let alone little ones a foot long; secondly that it is highly possible to fit modern radio control into a craft of that size, albeit with considerable planning and ingenu-

## Foot Long Monohull Called "Footy" New Zealand Minimalist Approach

By Mark Steele

ity; and thirdly, that model yachting is far from limited to larger size models and ideal ponds or lakes. The simple fact is, one can have fun and add a spice of retrieved boyhood adventure and lighthearted competitive spirit if one dares. I suppose there is a measure of truth to what I have been saying for a long time, it all gets back to the right attitude.

As I write this, some thirteen to fifteen Footy Class boats have been built, and several more are under construction: Hardly an Ancient Mariners' Thursday sailing day goes by without evidence of new boats being tried on the pond prior to the appearance of the larger models, and hulls being shown around for comment and helpful suggestion. As the instigator, I find my telephone rings often with calls from people outside of Auckland, one even from Western Australia, asking for guidelines about these little boats called Footy. That in itself certainly makes a statement about how fast news spreads these days.

Three Footys seen at our Ancient Mariners' Thursday evening sail.



I believe also, that the concept might in time just have appeal to youngsters, particularly those in Auckland who are enthused by yachting and all the activity surrounding the next America's Cup series, though let me temper that by saying that even with RC on steering only, there is still an equipment cost that is not cheap.

What is surprising to me, is how different the various boats completed to date actually are. No two are alike and many seen so far, not only sail well, but are engineering masterpieces in their own right, good enough to be mounted on the wall or mantelpiece with their slotted in stability keels removed, until their next use. Sloops aplenty, a catboat, a beautiful NZ mullet or mullet boat, and a ketch on the build, best of all, enthusiasm with eyes that light up, and smiling faces.

At the moment, just in case anyone wonders, whereas almost all of the boats in Auckland have been owner designed and built (ie. no plans exist), there are two available for purchase, one in UK, the other in Victoria, Australia. *My Boy Sam*, drawings and styrene sheets for the hull (or thin ply can be used for the hulls and just the drawings purchased) are available from Richard C. Webb, The Scale Model Boat Yard, Carvalho, Upper Moors Road, Brambridge, Eastleigh SO50 6HW, United Kingdom. <richard@webbz.freemove.co.uk>. The *Barry Cat*; drawings for a foot-long catboat are available from the designer, Barry Gibson, 55 George St., Newtown, Victoria, Australia.

In typical America's Cup fashion, March 1st will see the Footys race over the course for the Huey Writ-On (pottery, drinking) Cup, and a month later on April 5, the *Windling World* sponsored Beyond to the Pond main event will take place.

I think it will be fun if nothing else, and I may be wrong, but I also have a gut feeling that the Footy concept will grow, particularly with occasional fun racing around the buoys whenever the minimalist bug bites, and one wants a change. You can also stick one fully rigged on the front or back seat of the car, to be there just in case you suddenly feel like a wee sail.

Little things have a way of biting and provoking a reaction, do they not?

\*Mark publishes his little magazine, *Windling World*, thrice yearly. Typically it is a 28 page 5-1/2" x 8-1/2" size black and white production, nicely done with many good photos. It projects an aura of comfortable enjoyment of building and sailing model yachts. Mark can be reached at 42 Trinidad Rd., Forrest Hill, Auckland, New Zealand.







# You write to us about...

## Activities & Experiences...

### Get in a Boat on the Grand Old River!

*Clearwater's* Festival (Great Hudson River Revival) will take place at Croton Point Park, Westchester County, New York, June 21 and 22. This year the festival continues spectacular celebrations of solar powered stages, diverse performance arts, crafts, environmental exhibits, food and Working Waterfront. The focus is the Hudson River Working Waterfront, an ongoing feature of the Revival. We are planning many activities to get people on the water in small boats. *Clearwater*, founded on the water, wants to make festival attendees aware of our roots.

Working Waterfront expects to present representative vessels for visits and use. These boats are traditional and contemporary vessels, all active in historical, recreational or commercial service. The boats and the grand sloop *Clearwater* will be on the Hudson River, some with scheduled sails. A fleet of small boats will be available in which to messabout.

Messabout is a major Waterfront feature that gives owners, builders and users of small boats a chance to meet and swap rides and stories. The public attending our festival will be invited to join, in boats, on the water. The intimacy of being on the water and working or playing with small boats draws people into a natural environmental advocacy.

Stan Dickstein, (845) 4623113, dickstein@verizon.net, or Eric Russell, (917) 4465414, Beacon, NY

### Antique Boat Museum Summer Events

Some of our summer events at the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York of possible interest to *MAIB* readers are the following:

June 15-20: Great International Steamboat Flotilla

August 1-3: 50th Annual Antique Boat Show & Auction

August 8-10: Antique Raceboat Regatta  
And in the fall, on October 11, we host a Workboat Show.

For more information go to [abm.org](http://abm.org) or call (315) 686-4104



## Raceboat Regatta Returns August 8-10, 2014



## Adventures & Experiences...

### Round Robin Trip Planned

Here's my renewal for another year of good stories and tips on how to keep on paddling. I'll be out on the rivers and creeks around Chicago after "ice out" and hope to take a round robin trip on the Dupage River to the Illinois River and back up the old Illinois and Michigan Canal built in 1848.

Keep on publishing.

Bob McAuley, Woodridge, IL

## Information of Interest...

### Some Additional Safety Hints

Here's a small addition to the excellent "Keeping Comfortable and Safe" by Roger Barnes in the March issue. My friend, Jeff Zarwell, who conducts races on San Francisco Bay and elsewhere alerted me to the danger of not being able to shed a flotation device when trapped under the trampoline of a catamaran. He cautions that even the use of a knife may not be effective for one in this situation.

If I expect to sail in nasty conditions I often wear an antiexposure work suit (Coast Guard surplus). Additionally, I was recently discussing safety with friend Capt Stan Wilcox, who skippers tour boats on the Hudson River and who teaches classes on boating. He suggests that binoculars significantly aid the naked eye at night. The light gathering power of a set of 50 power objective lenses greatly enhances night vision. Simply being able to see danger can often enable a sailor to avoid it.

Derek Van Loan, Mill Valley, CA

### The Time Has Come

Time marches on and our time has come to sell (or liquidate) Columbia Trading Co. It has been great fun to operate this little enterprise, full of literary and human encounters among the books and people that have

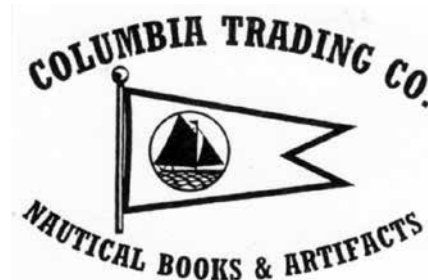
passed through our doors since we took over in 2002. Hopefully some successor will see the (albeit modest) value in the turnkey mail order catalog business, loyal customer list, diverse inventory of maritime books and artifacts, database of 33,000 book descriptions, decent name brand recognition and so forth. That is to say nothing of the intellectual stimulus in the materials (and folks) we deal with every day, alongside the challenge of operating a small specialty retailer.

Otherwise, come June or so it's off to the knackers, to be sliced up like a ship in the scrapyards of Bangladesh or Pakistan into diverse component parts for the libraries and reading tables of lovers of ships and the sea who have an eye for a deal or two. I will be first in line to lay in a stock of old friends and new adventures for when I have more time to enjoy them at leisure.

She'll say, "Where will you put them, dear?" and I'll say, "well, I'm not sure yet, but something will come to me." There sure will be plenty of bookshelves around here if it comes to that.

No regrets, it's been a fine run. And I have always enjoyed *Messing About*.

Dick Hawkins, Columbia Trading Co, 1022 Main St, West Barnstable MA 02668, [www.columbiatrading.com](http://www.columbiatrading.com), [info@columbiatrading.com](mailto:info@columbiatrading.com)



### Ralph Wiley Boats Looking for New Owners

*Fox* was built by Ralph Wiley in his boat yard, now Cutts and Case, in Oxford, Maryland, in 1938. Wiley campaigned the boat himself, notably winning the Naval Academy Fleet Cup in 1952. The hull is built on the Tancook Whaler model, a Nova Scotia work boat. In his book *Preacher's Son*, Wiley relates the tale of being passed by a Tancook Whaler while he was crewing on a 50' schooner in a New York Yacht Club cruise off Vineyard Haven. He and his shipmates were "constantly tending sheets and supposedly racing." A Tancook Whaler came out of Robinsons Hole, single handed by a gentleman in a derby hat puffing on a corncob pipe. The Whaler overtook the racing schooner and was next seen anchored and sails furled with the owner already gone ashore.

This impressed Wiley so much that he built a series of boats for his own use, each slightly larger than the predecessor. He built *Golden Bough*, *Charlotte*, *Mocking Bird*, *Fox* and *Vixen*. The current owners of *Fox* have expressed their intent to retire from sailing. *Fox* is intact and in need of a good inspec-



tion and evaluation in regards to systems and her structural components but appears to be sound overall. She has been stored inside for many years, a “barn find.” The hull is strip-planked mahogany, finished bright, with custom wooden cabinet work below decks.

The current owners of *Vixen* have also expressed a desire to retire from boating. The boat has been in the same family since 1985. Of the two Whaler models available for sale, *Vixen* is the most ready to go. She recently underwent a refastening program and had the deck stripped and scaled. New keel bolts were installed and the interior redone in the 1990s. The boat has been only lightly used on the Chesapeake and still has a set of Downes Curtis sails in working order. She has her original spinnaker, which the current owner advises caution with. The heavy and light Genoa are from the 1990s.

Ralph Wiley won the 1962 Poker Cup aboard *Vixen*, beating 50 other boats. This was his last race, moving on to motorsailors. *Vixen* could be put together in short order and would likely make a great showing for herself in the upcoming 2014 Elf Classic!

Cutts and Case is interested in finding new owners for these important boats and, going forward, in building a long term working relationship in order to keep *Fox* and *Vixen* in their home port of Oxford. Please contact Cutts and Case at (410) 226-5416 to arrange an inspection.

The Classic Yacht Restoration Guild



## Opinions...

### More from Boyd

You seem to always be able to come up with new things and I particularly enjoyed the “Adventures in Greenland Paddling” story. People know that the geography of the Earth is a lot more varied than what they probably encounter, but to be taken there in such detail (and with maps) is great.

I’m sure you will get mail about the “Not Easy to Subscribe” letter. I don’t see that paper checks make someone a curmudgeon. Nina Pratt doesn’t know anyone who uses them. I don’t know anyone who doesn’t. Plus, couldn’t she just put \$32 in cash in an envelope and trust that you and Jane won’t just pocket it and go out to dinner? Then some people probably don’t have envelopes.

All jokes aside, a good friend has worked in computer security for Aetna Insurance for many, many years and if people aren’t paranoid to start out, they will be when

they’ve talked with him for a few minutes. He said that virtually all companies, Aetna included, say that they want the best security available but in truth don’t like the way it slows things down and costs money that can never be recovered. They would rather deal with the problems that arise from half hearted security, but then with recent events at Target, etc, security is getting another look. But making the systems “foolproof” is difficult, if not impossible. Just look at the secrets that Edward Snowden was able to access. Why anyone would want their account information out there when it doesn’t have to be defies my comprehension. Plus, my limited experience with the electronically authorized transfers is that when something does go wrong, it is very hard to fix.

I could write an article about the free information callers (imagine how many more there would be if I had email?) and your solution that you mention in your note works for you (“*I’m not in the consultant business*”—Ed), but for someone who is in the boat business, it’s hard to say you can’t answer boat questions. For the most part I found years ago that it’s easier to try to provide a brief but polite answer. I tried telling people that I didn’t have time to talk to them, but the venom that often came in response (before I could hang up and then be called back) would interrupt the pace of my day. I’d have to calm down before I could get back to things. Plus, sometimes I’d venture a guess at a value on a hypothetical boat, only to get an irate call from the specific boat owner who actually had the undisclosed subject of the inquiry. “You said my boat was only worth...” I could reply that I didn’t know the caller, didn’t know his boat and didn’t want to know, but the hard feelings were already out there, so what was the point?

Boyd Mefferd, Boyd’s Boats, Canton, CT

### Cabin Heat is a Necessity

Almost all of my cruising has been in northern New England and Canadian Maritimes waters, and I agree that cabin heat is a necessity, with standing headroom very desirable. Our first boat, a Nordic Folkboat, relied on clay flower pots inverted over the kerosene Primus but the benefit was marginal at best. My last two cruising boats had brick fuelled stoves mounted on the cabin floor, but before the floor mounted stove on one boat I had a kerosene heater on a bulkhead above a bunk. Because the cabin floor was about 6” below the waterline, when standing our feet froze while sauna like heat caressed our upper body. Brickets are messy but also safer, I feel, than the kerosene that sloshed around in the bulkhead stove tank. There are few memories more pleasant than standing in the companionway at anchor, my backside warmed by the stove as I gaze at the little squalls spinning away astern.

William Sayres, Largo, FL

## Projects...

### Trash Trip

Offshore sailor Matt Rutherford and field scientist Nicole Trenholm were to depart on the first ever continent to continent survey of plastic marine debris in the world’s oceans, from Oakland, California, to Fukuoka, Japan, in late April in their 29’ W.D. Schock Harbor daysailer, designed pri-

marily for inshore waters. The departure date was scheduled to follow after the Strictly Sail Pacific Boat Show in Oakland and to take advantage of prevailing trade winds this time of year. The planned route skirts to the south of Hawaii before turning northward toward Japan. It is expected to take at least 70 days and cross about a quarter of the globe. The trip will be the longest marine plastics survey in history.

“The ocean is a vast and wild place, but unfortunately it’s not pristine. Human impacts can be seen even thousands of miles from shore. Our survey will help us understand just how much of an impact we’re having on the water that covers the majority of the planet, and on the countless species of marine organisms that depend on healthy oceans for their survival,” Rutherford said.

They will deploy a specially designed net with limited drag which will scoop up small pieces of plastic trash and plastic debris floating on the surface of the Pacific. Once the trip is complete in the summer, the debris will be catalogued and studied at onshore labs to help better understand the impact of plastic debris on marine life and on human health.

“The trip itself represents only half of the project. After we gather our samples and dock in Japan, we’ll then spend months analyzing the plastic in both Japan and back home in the US. Sailing across the Pacific Ocean will be a big adventure, but what we learn in the lab will be equally thrilling,” Trenholm said.

<http://www.Oceanresearchproject.org>

### Quite an Adventure

I am nearly finished with my 16’ Otter (rowing version) from bateau.com. I built the sailing version several years ago and sold it. I decided now to build the rowing version in an effort to whittle down my use of motors to propel my boats.

At the time of this writing (early April) I am racing to complete a 20’ Oxford rowing shell from Chesapeake Light Craft. This boat is a gift for a dear friend. I need to complete it by her birthday on April 20. This build has been quite an adventure, I’ll tell the story in a follow on article this summer.

Marc Bourassa, N Andover, MA

## This Magazine...

### No Publication So Worthwhile

Please renew our *MAIB*, there is no publication quite so worthwhile to keep those juices flowing.

This photo is of our *Canvasback* in the 2010 Gaffers Race in Orient, New York.

Maureen and Steve Corkery, Greenpoint, Long Island, NY.



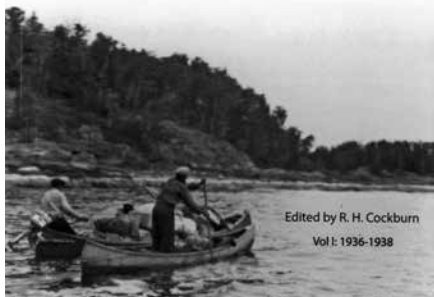
*Messing About in Boats*, June 2014 – 7



## Distant Summers

P. G. Downes' Journals of Travels in Northern Canada,

1936-1947



Edited by R. H. Cockburn  
Vol II: 1939-1947

## Distant Summers

P.G. Downes' Journals of Travels in Northern Canada, 1936-1947 (Vol I)

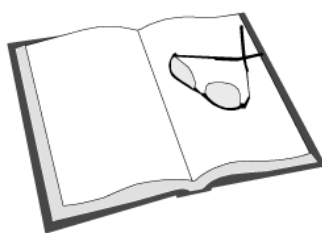
McGahern Stewart Publishing

368 Dalhousie St, Suite 301

Ottawa, ON K1N 7G3

ISBN: 978-0-9868600-2-7 – Price: \$26.00

The first of two volumes, *Distant Summers* (Vol I) contains the accounts of P.G. Downes' 1936 and 1937 trips in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba and of his 1938 journey to Great Bear and Great Slave lakes. Edited by R.H. Cockburn, this volume includes numerous notes, eight maps and nearly 100 photos.



## Book Reviews

### Must Reads for Wilderness Canoeists

Reviewed by Bob Hicks

...or anyone who aspires to do so, or just wants to armchair adventure in the North Country. These two companion volumes turned up in our mail and my initial skimming to ascertain how much they might interest me grabbed my attention so firmly that they immediately shoved aside my current book at the time. The "Publisher's Comments" below describe what lies within these two hefty volumes better than I can and save me trouble of even trying.

Suffice it for me to say here that this Boston area prep school teacher's approach to summer vacations in the late 1930s and his subsequent chronicling of what happened as he adventured on far northern rivers and lakes in castoff canoes of dubious condition while living with the local Cree Indian culture was a page turner for me.

After finishing the first volume one might think that more of the same in a second volume might be a bit of a "been there, done that" experience, but it was not so for me. And it was with some sadness that I reached the end of Volume II. The author returned to the remote country after World War II, only to find its allure was gone, the onset of the trappings of civilization having irretrievably changed everything.



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The second and final volume of *Distant Summers* (Vol II) contains the *Sleeping Island* journal of 1939, the 1940 account of Downes' attempt to canoe to Kasba Lake on the Kazan River and the journal of his final canoe voyage, in 1947, from Amisk Lake to Lac La Ronge. Edited by R.H. Cockburn, this volume includes introductions to each of the journals, numerous notes, 12 appendices, 13 maps, sketches by Downes, and c.80 photographs.

The purpose of this collection and its companion volume is to make available to historians, scholars of native cultures, wilderness travelers and readers drawn imaginatively to the old North, the journals kept by Prentice G. Downes during his journeys above the 54th parallel in 1936, 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1947. These, it should be specified, are his inland journals, records of his travels by canoe, boat and floatplane in Canada's far north; not included here are the diaries he kept of his experiences aboard *RMS Nascopie* on her Eastern Arctic trips of 1936 and 1937.

An introduction to Downes' life can be found in the McGahern Stewart 2011 edition of his book *Sleeping Island*, a simple sketch must suffice here. Born in 1909, he was educated at Kent School and at Harvard, where he took his A.B. in 1933. That year he accepted a position Belmont Hill School, a private boys' academy near Boston, where he taught American history and science courses until the United States entered the Second World War. His colleagues thought highly of "Spike," the nickname by which Downes was familiarly known to them. A fellow teacher has this to say about him:

### The Publisher's Comments



P.G. Downes camped with his frequent traveling companion Solomon Merasty, a local Cree.

"Spike was unquestionably an outstanding teacher. Dull indeed would be the student who forgot a course with him. Eccentric? Yes, and controversial. He tried to make people think. He was a very frank and realistic man. He and I were on a curriculum committee in which we were asked to define the purpose and goal of the school. The air was filled with noble sentiments, most of which I have since discovered are practically meaningless. Spike declared that the purpose and goal of the school was to get its students into first class colleges. If we did it, we survived; if we did not, we would go under. The Headmaster disapproved, of course, and this was never the published goal, but we all knew that Spike was right.

Spike's appearance at his first class of the year, bearded and in northern garb with rifle in hand, was an accepted legend. Honest, forceful, imaginative and sensitive are all words which fit Spike. He was one of the best teachers we ever knew." (Henry B. Sawyer, 1982).

The summer of 1936 was a full and varied one for Downes. It began on the North Shore of the St Lawrence, where for three weeks he resumed his activities of the pre-



vious year, salmon fishing and learning all he could of their traditions and beliefs from Montagnais and Naskapis he met in their summer quarters.

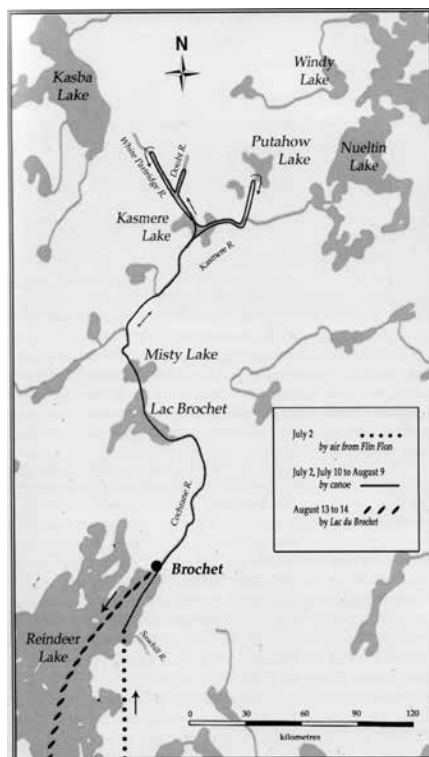
Then, on 14 July, realizing a long awaited desire, he boarded the Hudson's Bay Company's supply vessel *Nascopie* in Montreal as a passenger for the first half of her annual Eastern Arctic voyage (see Cockburn, *Eastern Arctic Journal*, 1983). Having paid her visits to posts on the Labrador, Baffin Island and Ungava coasts, *Nascopie* reached the port of Churchill on 12 August. It is here, in "this frightful town," as he called it, that we are about to join Downes as he awaits the train that will carry him to The Pas and then on to Flin Flon, his jumping off place for Pelican Narrows and Reindeer Lake.

Although before leaving Churchill he expressed some apprehension about what lay in wait, Downes had no very good idea of what he was in for. He had canoed in New England and, while fishing, had portaged a canoe a few times on the Quebec North Shore, and he had read omnivorously about travel of the sort he was about to undertake, but it is one thing to read of paddling from daybreak to dark against headwinds or of carrying your own weight or more with a tumpline, and quite another to do it.

As the journal reveals (and in some places only intimates), Downes suffered more than a little after pushing off from Pelican Narrows. But he was a determined and adventurous man and discovered in himself an actual appetite for hard labour and austerity. For example, he tells herein of the limited pleasures of feeding on seagulls and duck's heads, two years later, on the Slave, he would deliberately go on "little starves" of two or three days to test himself, to discover if he could keep going while half starved.

A schoolteacher's meager salary, of course, did not allow for substantial provender or equipment, still, beginning with this trip of 1936, Downes developed an almost perverse pride in his ability to travel on the meanest rations and to eat whatever came to hand. He also acquired a scorn for tents and hereafter refused to carry one, relying instead simply upon a mosquito bar and, in downpours, a tarpaulin.

By 1937 he was writing in his Saskatchewan journal, "I am very vain about my wanderings and have the ambition to be known some day among northern men as a real traveler." That ambition was given thrust by his tough experiences in 1936 and by his good fortune in having as his companion an Indian



Map of one of Downes' canoe trips.

The Brochet Boat, freight carrier on Reindeer Lake.



who was not only an able canoeman, but who was also friendly, loquacious and philosophical. "It doesn't do any good to hope in this country," Solomon Merasty tells Downes after one exhausting day, "you just do the best you can."

As much as he was impressed by Solomon's skills, especially by his ability to unfailingly build a fire in the rain, and as much as he came to relish competing physically with him, Downes most valued what this Pelican Narrows Cree could tell him about his people's beliefs for Solomon, although he was a Roman Catholic and was

fascinated by Tarzan movies, heavyweight boxers and dirigibles, was a fine source of information on the dream life and the spirit world of the Woodland Cree. The two men's conversations about weetigos, mimigwessos, dream power and the like are recorded in the journal, and it was these exchanges with Solomon that stimulated Downes' already intense interest in ethnology.

Solomon may be the person at the centre of the diarist's attention in this record, but from the 15th of August through the 24th, from his leaving the *Nescopie* to his setting off from Pelican Narrows with Solomon, we also find Downes seeking the company of, or fortuitously meeting, individuals from whom he seeks all they can tell him of northern life, of its natives, fur trade history, legends, travel routes and most vivid personalities. This wide ranging curiosity, already an ingrained characteristic of the man, was to prove deeply rewarding from 1937 through 1940, and again in 1947, for his journals of those travels embody a wealth of information now to be found nowhere else.

A further word about the contents of this 1936 journal is in order. For Downes' writing at its best, trenchant, fluent, rich in allusions and insights, one must go to *Sleeping Island*. The majority of his entries here were written at the end of a day's arduous travel, by the after light of dusk or by the flames and smoke of a campfire. In later years, when he canoed through July and August, the remains of mosquitoes were crushed between the pages of his diaries. On this trip, unless windbound, he paddled, and often enough portaged, from daybreak to dark.

It is hardly surprising then, that his prose style in what follows is seldom eloquent, that his phonetic spelling of Cree words is haphazard and that his entries are sometimes choppy or confusing. What is praiseworthy is his having kept so thorough a record of this, his first hard journey by canoe. That he did so bespeaks both a formidable will and an unquenchable wish to later review everything that he experienced.

This 1936 journal was written in pencil in a heavy 8"x20 1/2" ledger. The script is illegible in a few places and these instances are noted in square brackets. Also to be found in brackets are names that help to identify individuals and notes intended to clarify certain details for the reader. Because Downes' 1937 trip was in essence a continuation of his 1936 adventures, the sources used in editing both journals, and acknowledgements, will be found at the end of the 1937 journal.



# A Moveable Messabout Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington

By Dan Rogers

A chance to meet new people, experience new scenery and new places to take your boat. The plan is to start in some of the most rugged and pristine country the Idaho panhandle has to offer, move on to the canyonlands and semi arid country of the upper Columbia watershed and wind up in the prairie lakes amidst some of the most productive grain fields any where on earth. Our last stop will also be at the edge of the dramatic scab lands formed by the multiple prehistoric Lake Missoula floods that also scooped out topsoil from as far upstream as Montana and left it piled up where the Columbia River meets the Pacific Ocean. Think of it as just a sampler of what this part of the country has to offer small boat folks.

What I mean to tell you about is an idea for fun on the water with admittedly toned down heroics. Maybe even balmy temps in the 70s or 80s. No crowds, maybe no people at all. You've still got about three months to plan for this one.

## September 2014 – Eight Days Three Lakes

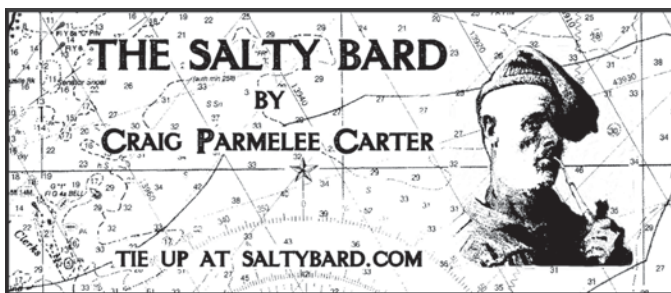
Think of it as a raid with the option of sleeping in your camper. A messabout with a changing set of scenery. A race where everybody finishes a winner. A cruise with no trailer shuttling. A wilderness adventure with close access to the freeway. Like that.

Somehow, the interior Pacific Northwest has been kinda passed on by when it comes to organized small boat events. The TSCA folks and Pocket Yachters, over on what they call the Wet Side, do an extraordinary job of bringing messers, builders and armchair types together for some spectacular events. But between places the likes of Lake Pepin, Eufaula, Havasu, Matagorda and Puget Sound, there seems to be only Andy Linn's tour d'force on the lower Columbia and what his fellow COOTS offer up in and about northern Oregon. That leaves just about a bazillion cool places to put paddle to puddle, or just about any other boat propulsion method you might care to bring.

I hope to see you in September 2014. DanAshore@conceptcable.com







## Stripping *Lady Hamilton*

When she's good, she's really good, but when she's bad she's bad.  
The brightwork is her make up and it's looking pretty sad.  
Under her covers I went this spring and eagerly unzipped her,  
Worked up my bravado, and carefully I stripped her.

A demanding performance, I'm sure you well know.  
You better not bruise her, for it's sure to show.  
Keep moving the heat gun, you must stay on top.  
You're liable to burn her the moment you stop.

The scraper is sharp and you're moving along,  
She might like it more if you sing her a song.  
Her toe-rail is finished and her eyebrow is fair,  
You start on her coaming, she's quite nearly bare.

You finish the job and then clean up the mess,  
She's looking real fine in her state of undress.  
But it's far from over, there's much more to this caper,  
Relax if you need to, then fetch the sandpaper.

Start with one-twenty, no coarser than that.  
This isn't your first time, you've got it down pat.  
You work your way up, the grain's starting to show,  
When you're all through it's a wonderful glow.

At last you sit back, maybe light up a smoke.  
If you'd paid for this labor, you'd surely be broke.  
The hard part is over; a thing of the past.  
A shame this alluring appearance won't last.

It's a ceaseless discussion at every marina,  
Should you finish the teak or just let it patina.  
You can let it turn silver, in an interim stage,  
But the wood grain will raise - she won't gracefully age.

There are all sorts of overcoats you can apply,  
As many, I'd guess, as the digits in pi.  
Oils or hard coats, in one part or two.  
All of them promise to keep her brand new.

In order to choose from this product buffet,  
One has to climb up the mountain and pray.  
There's so much hype it'll make you go spacey,  
Just like the make-up counter at Macy's.

Think I'll let her go naked till I can decide,  
What sort of cover-up I should provide.  
She's a real dream boat, for sure, a cream puff,  
Not many her age can look good in the buff.

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"A tenderfoot to Alaska supposedly alighted from a bush plane on a wilderness airstrip, walked away a few steps and reached immediately for his bear spray canister," related Nancy Pfeiffer with a grin. "He then doused himself liberally, spraying his arms, face and exposed flesh. The dude had it all wrong, the spray was designed to repel bears and not for human protection. His skin was smarting and irritated by his mistake." Perhaps the story was apocryphal, but head guide Nancy shared that anecdote most convincingly. Guides so enjoy telling tall stories to amuse their guests.

Our party of eight was waiting for the arrival of our bush pilot and his plane at a gravel runway in Arctic Village, Alaska. It was early in July 2013 and we lazily basked in the hot sun. To the north was the Brooks Range, beyond the East Fork of the Chandalar River which flowed just below the bank from the airstrip. Dirk, our pilot, would fly us up and over the Brooks Range to the Canning River where we were slated to begin our expedition. Meanwhile, we killed time, chatting about our backgrounds and swapping tales of travels and expeditions.



If we have forgotten anything, it's too late now. Waiting for our flight to the Canning River with packs and bear barrels loaded with food and supplies for ten days.

I felt blessed, being among the most outstanding and remarkable people I had ever met. Half the time I wondered what I was doing in this amazing group. They had traveled all over the world, two flew their own planes and three were wildlife biologists. Committed wholeheartedly to this ten day expedition, they displayed an indomitable, never quit spirit.

Nancy was the trip leader, or "T.L." in guide's lingo. A natural athlete, she worked winters with the Alaska Avalanche School. As a guide, she had gone on numerous trips in Alaska and Patagonia. After this expedition she would be heading for Alaska's remote Aleutian Islands.

Martha, the co leader, had gone on or led 150 rafting expeditions down the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. She owned a seasonal restaurant in Haines, Alaska, and lived in the desert of southern Utah during the winter.

Klara, the third guide, was a recent college graduate, a skier and an artist. She had brought along her sketchbook, pencils and pens in hopes of capturing the beauty of the Brooks Range.

Surpassing, perhaps, even the zeal of men for the wilderness, these three female guides yearned to be in the mountains and on the rivers. For them, life between expeditions often was stale and boring.

The guests certainly shared the guides' enthusiasm. Ron and Lee were husband and wife wildlife biologists, retired faculty from

## The Gray Silence Rafting Alaska's Canning River to the Arctic Ocean

By Richard E. Winslow III  
In memory of Nancy Alden Hunt  
Outdoorswoman, Gardener, Teacher,  
Writer and Friend

the University of Maine at Orono. During their worldwide travels Ron had photographed more than 1,500 plant specimens. His camera gear for this trip represented a \$10,000 to \$15,000 investment.

Gwyn, also a wildlife biologist, had fled the overcrowded East Coast and adopted the frontier state of Wyoming, where she was now taking flying lessons. Her adventurous life included scaling Devil's Tower (a daunting monolith in eastern Wyoming) and relaxing in her yurt in the Bighorn Mountains. Having just completed a week's backpacking trip in the Brooks Range, Gwyn had spent a day and night at a Fairbanks lodge for a hot

In the early afternoon Dirk, "King of the Brooks Range Pilots" as I had dubbed him, landed his 1951 de Havilland Beaver aircraft (I had met him during my 2011 Noatak River expedition). His wife, Danielle, served as the plane's mechanic, keeping the vintage single engine warhorse in excellent condition.



Bush pilot Dirk pumps aviation gasoline into his vintage plane in preparation for the flight over the Philip Smith Mountains.

Dirk could accommodate four passengers, each with a 50lb allowance for gear. So he would take the first group of four and then return to pick up the remaining four. I was in the second group as the guides went on the first flight to set up camp on the Canning.

Months before our trip I had enjoyed researching the origins of a few of the geographic names we would encounter. The Canning River was named in 1826 by the first English explorers in the region in honor of Sir George Canning, the British foreign secretary. On the other hand, as a New Englander, I felt particularly proud about the designations of the Brooks Range and its subdivision, the Philip Smith Mountains, named for two American geologists. Alfred Hulse Brooks (1871-1924) was educated at Harvard College in Massachusetts. His associate, and later his successor, Philip Sidney Smith (1877-1949), was a native of Medford, Massachusetts, and also a Harvard graduate. He ultimately retired and died in St Albans, Vermont. Unlike Canning, who had never set foot on the North American continent, Brooks and Smith had spent years exploring the Arctic vastness in the early 20th century, mapping and writing geological reports.

The Brooks Range cast a spell over me as no other mountain range has ever done. It was love at first sight, a love that has only grown with each successive expedition (this one being my third). Minutes into Dirk's second flight over the range, I looked down in awe. We flew over ridge after ridge, with limestone bands twisting back and forth and rising to knife edge cleavers, poised as if to split the sky. Glaciers had gouged out jagged, straight up and down cirques. Out of the snowfields, protected by shadow, meltwater creeks raced down ravines, widening into rivers as they spilled onto the valley floor. At the bottom, lakes reflected the brilliant blue sky. The ice, snow, water and wind erosion had been grinding away at these rocks since the last ice age and this relentless process will continue for thousands, perhaps millions more years. The landscape looked as if a grizzly of mythic proportions had raked his claws time and again over a clay block, mangling it to shreds and then giving it a swift kick for good measure.

shower and clean clothes. Now, less than 24 hours later, she was raring to head out again.

Karen was a doctor from Colorado who owned and flew her own plane. Guides always appreciate having a doctor on their trips, a backup in the event of medical problems. She gladly dispensed advice and treatment. Every morning she would say to me, "Dick, how are you today?" "Fine," I would answer, "and I appreciate your concern."

I am a librarian, historian and writer from New Hampshire. Writing up and photographing canoeing trips for more than a quarter century has been a great pastime, providing opportunities to relive my experiences anew with each successive draft and photograph selection.

We all were primed and ready to go. Northward ho! Our original objective was to canoe some 70 miles downstream from our put in on the Canning River to an Arctic Ocean takeout. Two days earlier, however, the guides had received an updated report on river conditions. "I've heard from bush pilots who have flown over the area," said Nancy, "that there is much ice along the riverbanks. That has prompted our decision to change the plan from a canoeing to a rafting trip, making our expedition much safer."

That matter resolved, I did not have to worry about being assigned a canoeing partner, and the two rafts would hold much more gear, in both weight and size. Four paddlers would power each craft.



We were flying over the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (or ANWR, its bureaucratic Department of the Interior acronym). For the time being I chose to ignore the monumental clashes of the environmentalists/conservationists and the petroleum executives/lobbyists battling either to save the area from becoming an extension of the Prudhoe Bay oil field or to exploit it. Voluminous reports, endless arguments and hot air speeches, pro and con, had been raging for years in Juneau, in Washington and, in fact, around the world. Whoever was going to win, however, had little relevance for me now from the vantage point of my cockpit window. My mind was set solely and totally on one thing, an *idée fixe*, to survive this expedition.

After roughly an hour's flight over this incredible landscape, Dirk descended to the valley floor and landed his plane on a bumpy gravel bar airstrip. At this point the youthful, fast moving, eighth of a mile wide Canning River was racing northward. Nancy and Martha were standing near a slough, foot pumping a rubber raft. I noticed immediately that it was an Avon, affectionately dubbed "the Cadillac of rafts." Our expedition was completely dependent on these rafts, the only alternatives to a 70-mile trek downstream to the Arctic Ocean airstrip. If we were lucky, I figured, we might find a halfway decent landing site along the way.



Unloading the gear at the Canning River gravel airstrip loosens the muscles for paddling. Packing, reorganizing, loading and unloading equipment occurs countless times on expeditions.

With bug nets over their heads and air pumps at their feet, Martha and her team inflate the two Avon rafts.



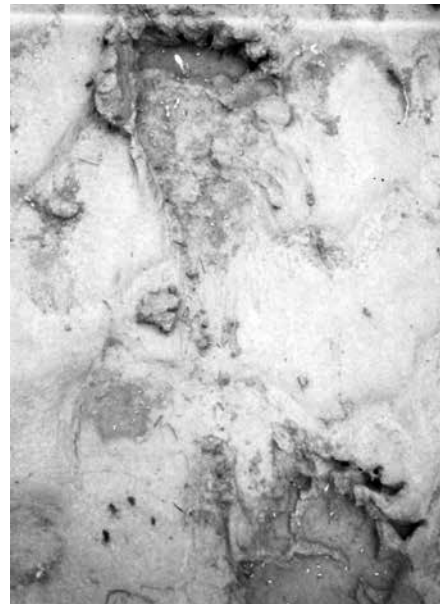
No place to get lost. Largely unknown even to modern day explorers, the Philip Smith Mountains with their meltwater runoff give birth to a host of rivers. Most peaks and creeks remain nameless.



"These rafts are 13' long," Martha said, "and weigh 125 pounds. Most accidents occur when someone is getting into or getting out of a raft." After glancing at the snarling flow of meltwater, I was glad the expedition had evolved from a canoeing to a rafting trip, a much less risky option. Once the raft was inflated, the new arrivals boarded and paddled 50 yards on a side channel to the Plunge Creek campsite. Like almost all Far North campsites, there were no signs, trails or fire rings, only an acceptably level place to call "home," as canoeists/rafters/kayakers refer to their camp.



A wet and buggy home on the Canning River, the author's tent is dwarfed by the dramatic Philip Smith Mountains.



A grizzly bear track in the mud keeps everyone alert. Any well dressed Alaskan canoeist/rafter/kayaker always carries a bear spray canister, even in camp.

"I have everything except red meat and fresh fish, which would attract bears." Martha, a gourmet chef, checks her food supplies.



Ahead for our party was a Class I or Class II river, the easiest categories on a scale leading up to Class VI, the most extreme danger. Class VII, not included in the usual ranking, is lethal. Our isolation elevated the realistic classification by a few notches. Along with swift water and occasional boulders, savage winds blowing south of the Beaufort Sea and up the river would periodically reverse the downwind flow of the current against us.

Our rafts, second homes during the day's paddle, were just as essential and critical to the life of this expedition as tents, sleeping bags, medical kits and food. We took great precaution to ensure that the rafts would only scrape, and not gouge, the river bottoms. A leaking raft, its floor ripped out and damaged beyond repair, would have brought a swift end to the trip. We all knew the stakes. This river descent was not an idyllic paddle for the faint hearted. A phrase from Robert Service's poem, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, about prospectors in the Arctic "who moil for gold" struck me as an apt comparison. We rafters would have to moil with every paddle stroke.



When in doubt, jump out. In case of grounding, the guides in the rear seats hop out to lighten the load and free the raft in order to resume forward motion.

As an omen of conditions to come, at 2am that first "night," during 24 hours of continuous daylight, I was sound asleep in my tent when the flash of a sudden lightning bolt penetrated my closed eyelids. Jolted awake instantly, I then listened to torrential rain pounding on the canvas walls.

The next afternoon the weather still remained unsettled and cloudy. As we assembled at the two rafts, Nancy and Martha held forth. There are three priorities, they stressed, for a successful expedition; safety, safety and safety. (And here I'll add my own fourth word to that list, SAFETY!) We practiced getting in and out of the rafts and then went through

Ready or not for the morning launch. The two rugged Avon rafts hopefully will hold up during the expedition with nary a leak or puncture.



Strapping down the raft's cargo is crucial, especially when the river is braided with numerous hazards.



Don't fall or slip! Ice along the Canning River is commonplace, even in early July. Without crampons or ice axes, walking on the ice requires utmost caution and balance.



the general commands, pretty much the same as in canoeing, "Left," "Right," "Forward," "Fast Forward," "Back" and "Stop."

On day three we broke camp, loaded the rafts and were underway, the river level high after so much rain. The next four days passed quickly, paddling, setting up camp and hiking. On the river, along the 4' cutbanks, we frequently encountered shelf ice streaked with dirt and pebble patches, a continuous strip of perhaps a hundred yards. At the ice lip edge, overhanging cornices remained in place, at least in that moment of time. Whenever we landed for a break I had to be particularly careful walking on the ice, making sure to keep my boot soles flat on the slippery surface.

Once, while inside my tent, I heard what sounded like a distant clap of thunder. After unzipping the tent door and peering out in the direction of the noise, I saw the last shattered

pieces of ice splashing into the river. A calving like that could release tons of rotten ice, a process usually repeated a few minutes later. The recent rain and above freezing temperatures had weakened the fragile crust, so more ice was destined to break off without warning.

Mosquitoes swarmed. Outside the tents each of us wore a protective mesh jacket with a head net attachment. Each time I entered my tent, despite my speedy zip up, the frenzied insects darted inside with me. At bedtime my routine chore was at least 15 minutes of vigorous slapping at these "Alaskan state birds." Eventually I had killed so many mosquitoes inside my rented tent that the inside of the roof was smeared with my blood. I began to wonder whether the outfitter would charge me extra for all the mess.

We took those minor difficulties in stride as we looked forward to our meals.

On the coastal plain, tents on the tundra are at the mercy of brutal winds.





We ate well, with Martha serving the Mexican specialties she had perfected at her restaurant. One evening we had a Thanksgiving style turkey dinner and the next night a quinoa dish. At breakfast or supper, Martha regaled us with her Grand Canyon rafting expedition stories. After 33 years of guiding on “the Grand,” as the guides call it, she knew firsthand the history and the characters, along with the mishaps.



Chilly/chili today and chilly tomorrow. Inside the cook tent everyone relishes Martha’s hearty Mexican dishes.

“On one trip,” she said, “one of the guides (let’s call him Tom) happened to spot a camera half buried and stuck in the mud below the waterline. The camera, of course, was now a piece of junk, water and silt damaged beyond repair. But Tom cleaned up the outside metal and kept the relic in his raft as a souvenir.

“A few days later Tom’s group met up by chance with another expedition. Tom excitedly called over to the members of this just encountered raft. ‘Could you take a picture of our paddlers for me? I’ll get as close as I can in these swirling waters and then toss the camera so you can catch it.’

“As Tom’s boat drew near the other raft, he heaved the camera on target. The old piece of salvage splashed and sank short of its goal. The fellow poised for the catch was utterly devastated, sick at heart, to see the expensive camera gurgle and then disappear without a trace.

“Tom waited for a few seconds and then laughed. ‘Don’t feel bad,’ he said, ‘the camera was utterly worthless and I deliberately threw it short. It’s all a huge joke.’”

Northward ho! On to the Arctic Ocean! Catching the main deep lead is vital to avoid being diverted into a dead end channel.



Another of Martha’s stories touched on a potentially serious episode. “On one set of rapids, a raft flipped and everyone made it out safely to shore except for one older lady who separated from the main party and was swept into a side canyon. For some time I could not see her. No one knew what her condition might be or how long she would be stranded without help. We rescuers finally reached the woman. Having had an hour of exposure, she was experiencing the early stages of hypothermia. We carried the woman to the bank where our rafts had been beached. Then we placed her in an over-size sleeping bag. Two men immediately crawled into the bag on either side to provide body heat for resuscitating her. After an hour in the bag, she was sufficiently revived to smoke a cigarette and drink a Jack Daniel’s whiskey. For the rest of her days, she relished relating this incident as her favorite story. ‘For the first and only time in my life, I was in bed with two studs.’”

For several glorious days we paddled down the Canning through the Shublik Mountains. We also took day hikes in search of grizzlies, musk oxen, caribou, moose, Arctic foxes and birds. Led by the wildlife biologists, we found only feathers, scat, hoofprints and frustration.

Continuing our journey, we descended to the coastal plain. We had traded the warmer temperatures of the valley nestled between the mountains for a plain that was buffeted by cold winds blowing inland off the Arctic Ocean. The mosquitoes had left us, of course, having sense enough to avoid such frigid temperatures. I was surprised at my own reaction to the coastal plain delta. I found it even more

fascinating than the mountains, an endless flatness stretching to the horizon. The delta was threaded with streams and what was left of the landscape was clogged with channels, gravel bars, islands and mini ponds, water and land fighting to claim the same space. The old, exhausted river seemed confused about where to go, in fact, it reversed when driven back by waves.

River smart, in the lead raft, Nancy instinctively found the main channel, often shallow and bony. She and Martha occasionally jumped out of their rear seats to pull, push and rock the grounded rafts over submerged gravel ridges. A mistaken detour down a secondary dead end channel would have meant lost time and sore muscles. In this maze, our group ultimately abandoned the Canning to access the Staines River, a parallel route leading directly downstream to the coastal airstrip.

Day eight loomed ominously, the most critical day of the entire trip. Facing us was a ten mile paddle to the airstrip takeout. If we didn’t do this marathon, any potential storm might have delayed us for days. As we were breaking camp Ron and Lee checked their thermometer, it was 35°F with a slight wind and fortunately no gusts. Feeling the bone chilling cold, we all dressed in five or six layers beneath our PFC/ life jackets. Nancy and Martha pressed ahead mightily. In anticipation of this day’s ordeal, we hadn’t pitched the kitchen tent the previous day in order to save time in the morning. We had opted instead to upend the two rafts to create a windscreen. Once in place and tied down, they provided adequate shelter for cooking and dining.



Improvising a solution to ensure a quick morning start. The upright rafts serve as a windbreak for the kitchen in lieu of pitching the cook tent and thus delaying the morning departure.

"We all need to work together now," Nancy said, "striking the tents, washing and wiping dishes and carrying packs down to the river. Just don't stand around in the cold while the guides are working. We'll operate as a team." All of us doubled our efforts, pitching in and managing to reduce the usual one hour loading time to 45 minutes.

In his writings about the Arctic Jack London refers to "the white silence," for him a North of snow, ice and cold, out there, blending vaguely as a void. As I gazed around me I saw gray fog, gray gravel bars, gray river water and gray rafts, a gray silence. We had to overcome the gray silence. Once in the rafts, we raised and clicked our paddles in a show of unity. Make no mistake, this effort was no foolhardy, daredevil stunt. With strong leadership, our party was physically fit and imbued with a will to win spirit to overcome adversity.

"Fast forward," Martha bellowed again and again as we dug our paddle strokes into the wind driven water. When we grounded occasionally, Martha leaped out to free the raft. "Fast forward!" "Left side only!" "Right side only!" Foot by foot and yard by yard, we fought the battle. Once or twice we twirled full circle in the heavy rush of water and the sharp turns around gravel bars. With much pulling power, we swung the raft around and angled it forward again. "Stop!" she yelled finally when she gauged that everyone was tiring and we were safely beyond obstacles for the time being. It was a most welcome command.

Every 45 minutes or so we dragged the rafts ashore and trudged along the plain. This was no time for photography, note taking or idle chatter. Everyone instantly began jumping, stretching, flapping arms, running in place, anything to restore circulation. We kept rubbing our gloved hands over our legs, shoulders and arms. Gradually I felt warmer, the blood flowing through my numbed limbs. Martha passed around a thermos of hot water that she had wisely boiled back at our morning field kitchen. We all drank from it, managing to empty the bottle. The water coursed down my throat and tasted delicious. Now we were ready to resume the fight on the river.

"Fast forward!" "All together now!" "Stop!" My brain and muscles became as one, bent on only one purpose, to move forward. I never felt really tired, just buoyed by a constant adrenaline rush that never left me. Then, there it was. The landing strip! The Bird Camp tents! Hallelujah! Victory! Joy! Peace! Safety! Home!

Better than a pep rally. At the end of a Herculean paddling day, a roaring fire soon warms numbed faces.



After unloading our gear and beaching the rafts, we combed the tundra in search of twigs and branches, few and scattered, and cradled them in our arms on the hike back to the riverbank. Martha torched the piled up twigs and we celebrated with a bonfire, the life giving warmth restoring us and the red flames devouring the gray silence.

We then set up our own camp, probably a mile south of Bird Camp, the latter consisting of four or five tents and a larger headquarters office tent. Bird Camp, which was closer to the ocean than we were, had been a fixture at that location for several consecutive summers as a field station of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, a division of the Department of the Interior. During our stay here, five or six ardent ornithologists would visit us, all of them proudly wearing their US Fish and Wildlife shoulder patches on their coats. Their purpose was to study and assess the reasons for the decline of Arctic birds. To say the least, they hated poachers and specifically the policy of a South American country where one species of migratory birds is legally killed as a delicacy. Their research was part of a joint venture by two other nations of the North, Canada and Russia, in a cooperative effort to halt the decline of the bird population. "The caribou migration herd left here a week ago," they told us. "They stayed a week and then moved on."

Our tentsites were probably five miles from the open Beaufort Sea. The general rule holds that polar bears may range as far as 20 miles inland in their search for food, but at this time of year, they were still out on the pack ice and presumably would not come on land. "One does not camp on points," Nancy said, "as that is the first place the bears would reach should they come ashore. But summer hasn't arrived here yet. It's late winter or early spring at best. So there is very little chance that they would migrate to our camp, so we won't need to post guards."

The next morning brought back the Arctic sun, casting a yellow glow on the tents and creating the illusion of warmth, but only an illusion. The wind and the cold had returned in full force. As Nancy had planned all along, she wanted us to enjoy the full day at the Arctic coast. We had originally intended to take one raft, all eight of us aboard, for a power paddle downriver to Brownlow Point. That goal was dashed in a moment as the fiercest winds of the entire expedition blasted full tilt off the sea and swept upstream with white capped waves. Our exploration would have to proceed on foot.

With a few others, I hiked over the tundra. After about two miles, I dipped my hand into

an Arctic Ocean lagoon. Two loons swam and dove farther out in the half sheltered place. As I glanced in the direction of Brownlow Point, I noticed a snow or ice mound capping the end of the promontory. A few minutes later, when I casually looked back, I was gazing at black rock, the snow and ice gone. I surmised I had originally been looking at an iceberg hovering off the point, in just that very short time, it had floated away.



Either as an act of courage, or more likely as a tourist stunt, the author dips his hand in the frigid Beaufort Sea, part of the Arctic Ocean.



Not a native fruit. A rusting abandoned aviation gasoline drum, nicknamed an "Arctic strawberry," mars the landscape. Such environmentally and aesthetically harmful trash is banned in the North today

Don't get lost on the way back to Base Camp. When hiking on the vast tundra near the Arctic Ocean, it's crucial to dress warmly to combat the wind and frigid air.





Near the lagoon I spotted two rusting "Arctic strawberries," the nickname given to abandoned aviation gasoline drums. In the old days the pilots just left them, a practice that fortunately is now illegal. Chances are these eyesores will remain there, undisturbed for centuries, as part of the scenery.

On the way back, our group reached a waist high glacial erratic boulder that offered welcome protection from the wind. As we crouched to rest, we spotted in the distance a member of the Bird Camp team, checking birds' nests in the swampy areas and shallow pools. We later learned that foxes had destroyed the nests and devoured the eggs.

The last morning of the expedition, day ten, I awoke to a pea soup fog with visibility barely as far as the next tent. I was sure that the chances of Dirk's arrival were practically nil. In time, the sun broke through the fog and a blue sky emerged. We packed up and had breakfast, with the uptilted rafts again providing a windbreak for our kitchen and dining area. As we anticipated Dirk's arrival, we relaxed and swapped stories.

"This is about the hardest expedition I have ever been on," Nancy said, "even harder than my treks in Patagonia and climbing Mount Aconcagua in the Andes, the highest mountain in South America.

"Once, in the Arctic, I took a long day hike with an Inuit friend. It was a terrible, most wretched experience with wind and cold. Once the hike was over I casually asked my friend for his reaction about the ordeal. I half expected that such a battle against the elements for him was relatively routine, as he had lived there all his life. 'It was the worst trip,' he answered, 'that I have ever been on.'"

As I thought about this particular expedition, I kept recalling an anecdote that I had jotted in my field notebook. Years ago a sports reporter was interviewing Paul Hornung, the great college and pro football running back nicknamed "the Golden Boy" by the media. And the Golden Boy he was, for at the height of his career he had many records, a top salary and the adulation of his fans. His fame in the sport was secure. "Along with being finan-

cially set for the rest of your life," the intrusive reporter probed, "you have achieved everything you could have ever wanted in this game. Have you considered retiring?"

Hornung did not fumble in his answer. "If I wanted to," Hornung responded, "I could quit today, move to the French Riviera, lie on the beach and clip my stock and bond coupons. But hell, I love to score." I shall never be in Paul Hornung's league, of course, but I understand what he meant. I suppose I could count the Canning River as my last expedition and safely retreat to my comfortable writing den to crank out more books. For her part, Karla could resolve to paint in her studio and participate in art exhibitions. And so on down the line, each Canning River veteran could easily walk away from the beached rafts for good and be done with it. But that would be a cop out and it never entered our minds for a moment. We continue to hunger for more rivers. And heck, we love to paddle.

#### Practical Information

Given the remoteness and isolation of the Brooks Range, this area demands utmost respect. I highly recommend the services of professional guides and bush pilots. They know this vast country, tenderfeet do not.

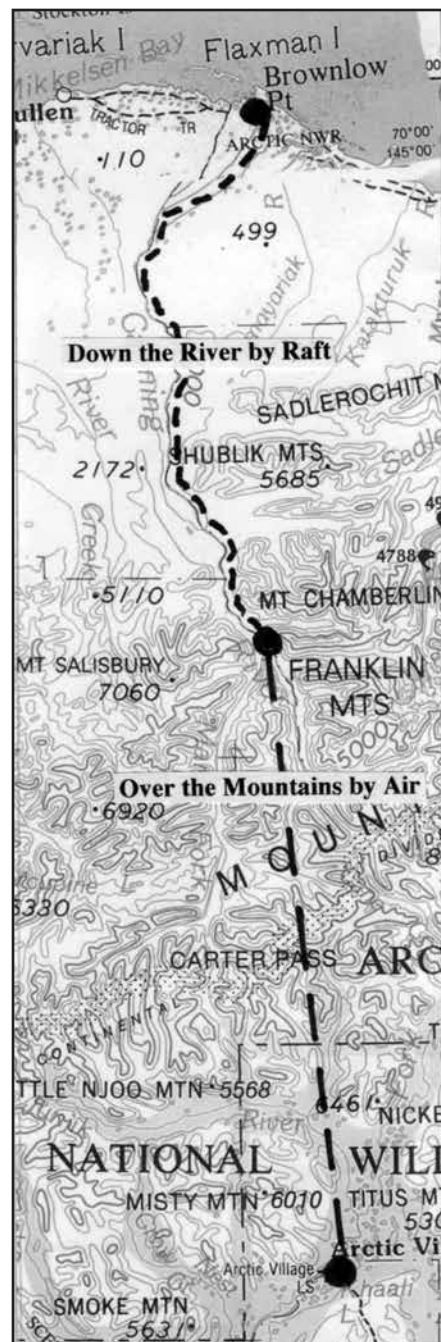
For Guide Service, contact:

Arctic Wild  
Box 80562  
Fairbanks, AK 99708  
Tel: (907) 479-8203  
Toll-free: (888) 577-8203  
Email: info@arcticwild.com  
Website: www.arcticwild.com

For Bush Pilot Service, contact:

Dirk Nickisch and Danielle Tirrell  
Coyote Air Service  
**Summer:** Coyote Air Service  
PO Box 9053  
Coldfoot, AK 99701  
Tel: (907) 678-5995  
**Winter:** 2199 Nottingham Dr  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
Tel: (907) 479-5995  
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Heading back to the unreal world of civilization and hot showers. In bright sunny weather, Dirk arrives to fly out the first contingent of the Canning River rafters.



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August 4, 2005: I awoke to another quiet gray day. The 0800 barometric pressure was 30.25" mercury. A family of immature eider were diving vigorously for food accompanied by a watchful adult female in the bay in front of my tent. Barometric pressure was down 0.05" mercury at 2030. I noticed that the ceiling was dropping indicated by a cloud forming around the peaks and enlarging although the sun is shining and it is warm with a slight wind. I broke camp and launched without any problems. I paddled from the southeast end of Puguta Island to an inlet of Manitsog Island on the opposite side, dodging accumulated icebergs.

The Mavica still camera, unfortunately, is much more sensitive to cold than the video camera. When I installed its battery the battery level indicator showed that the battery had 45 minutes operating time, but because of the cold the camera would hardly work so I had to take more video in place of still shots. I will have to figure out a way to keep the Mavica warmer on overcast days like this one.

I know that batteries do not recharge in cold conditions. One technique I use is that while in my tent, when I am recharging the batteries, I keep them warm against my body. I don't think the FM50 battery is able to recharge at less than 65°F or recharging takes much longer.

I was delighted to find some guillemots nesting on the point very low to the water. I can always tell when I am near these black and white red footed birds because first I hear their very soft, ultra high pitched peeps and then I see them flying out from the rocks to investigate me. They always roost as single nests on rock indentations just large enough for the nest. Here I came across some immature ones that were fully feathered but not yet able to fly. Their parents showed some anxiety by calling repeatedly as I approached but the flightless young stood on the small openings of the sheer rock faces looking at me, as if they were saying, "Hey what are you doing here?" and I looked at them with the same thought in mind.

I was delighted to just happen upon this moment when I could take closeup pictures of guillemots. This was the first time I have found guillemot nests just a couple meters above the water. There were numerous adults intensely busy feeding on the specialized organisms that live only near the icebergs. I have found that the best moment to see guillemots and Qaqluk or Timmiakuluk (Northern Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis) is when they are preoccupied

# Adventures in Greenland Paddling

## A Visit to Upernavik, Greenland, Paddling on the Edges of and Crossing Upernavik Icefjord

By Gail Ferris – Gaileferris@hotmail.com

### Part 4

with feeding near icebergs.

I enjoyed paddling down the east side of the passage between Puguta and Manitsog islands. Manitsog was rugged dark brown granitic and basaltic rock, mostly steep cliffs straight into the water with a bay made up of broken huge chunks of rock, not a place to consider landing unless in extreme desperation. On the opposite side, Puguta had long gently rolling boggy land, however, I am not sure if there was a spot to land quite as convenient as the first bay I had tucked into.

Just on the edge of the bay after the small peninsula in the passage Ikerasaq was an island named Umanatssuk, meaning a heart or stopper shaped island in Greenlandic. This name makes plenty of sense when giving directions as to where you have been. Toward the end of Ikerasaq passage, approaching what would be the north side of Puguta, once again rock cliffs unsuitable for landing started to develop. I said to myself, "Glad I camped where I did last night. That was a nice camping spot Bruce told me about." We kayakers get to be surprisingly picky about where we might camp. I find that I like lots of bright sun so I avoid north sides of islands. Of course, water is very important. Protection from the wind is handy if available but not always.

At N73°03'08" W55°09'53" inside the near end of Manitsog Island there is nothing but steep rock faces continuing around both sides of Qagsserssuaq sarqa as far as I could see from my cockpit. Rounding the end of Manitsog Island I headed to the opposite side, crossing Qagsserssuaq sarqa, a passage of about a mile. On the opposite side it was just straight up and down, nowhere along that escarpment, even where the brooks fed down from

the top and the bays came in was there even the slightest possibility for a landing on Qagsserssuaq peninsula.

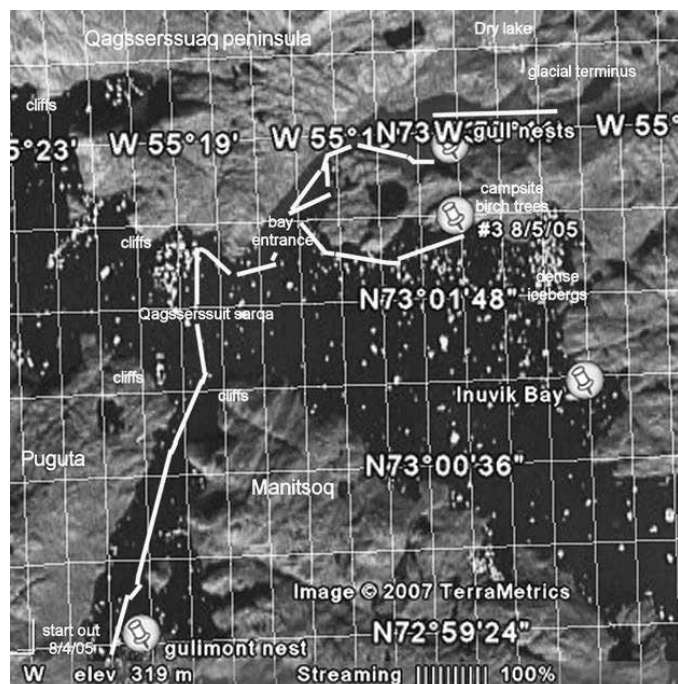
The entire south face of this peninsula offered no refuge and it had permanent icecap on the mountain peaks that could be seen on a clear day from Upernavik. These peaks were level in height with Sanderson's Hope, which is 1042 meters. On Qagsserssuaq, Qagsserssuaq peak was 1080 meters high, rising in about mile straight up from the water. Other peaks on this dramatic peninsula were also in this same range.

The northwest side of Puguta is equally as steep with a peak just about on top of the water that is 820 meters high. There is also a razorback shaped peak on Puguta called Puso just north of the previous peak that is just as vertical. No place to land! And I bet the passage is equally as deep as are many passages in this area. Not a place to drop anchor!

I thought to myself how glad I was paddling this kayak, Long Haul Mark I, because this area was not the place to be paddling anything but a very solid, well designed kayak and spray skirt with solid paddles and proper coldwater paddling clothing. If I unexpectedly encountered a threatening situation such as raging wind I knew that I could depend on my kayak. This was a large open area where I could not just paddle to shore to escape a situation. I was very glad that I had repaired my kayak last night. It paddled superbly, gliding over the water effortlessly and the seat was wonderfully comfortable. Sometimes the sea conditions, currents and waves, harmonize with the hull and my stroke that I rhythmically paddle in synchrony with the waves effortlessly for hours on end.

This day I could feel that that I would most likely be on the water, exploring for hours. On the map the opening to the tiny fjord looked as though it was very narrow. I was especially excited to see what it would be like to negotiate the passage in my kayak and to find out if or where there were any places to land.

I was looking for some of the more interesting birds, Naajavaarsuk, Ivory Gull Pagophila eburnea; Apparluk, Razorbill Alca torda; Appaworst, Thick Billed Murre Uria





lomvia; Appa siquttoq, Thin Billed Murre Uria aalge and Appaliarsuk (Apparaq), Dovekie Alle alle. In 1993 I had found a very interesting colony of Razorbills and it was exciting to watch how they fly. First thing they did was to jump off their cliff face about 50' above the water, landing on their breasts right in front of my kayak and then to get airborne again they would run over the water until they could gain altitude with their wings.

I never realized that there might be a bird that would have to take flight in this manner. I felt like telling them that they really ought to try jumping off the rocks and flapping their wings at the same time, but who knows and I would not want to confuse them. They might wind up flying underwater instead of over the water. It is best to leave things as they are. I did wonder how they feel after doing a belly flop from such height, I would think crash landing on water from such a height would really hurt, then again they have feathers and I don't.

Ivory gulls choose to nest in these remote areas so I was hoping that I might come across one that might be nesting in this secluded area.

Deciding what actually was the entrance to the bay was challenging because all the rocks were the same color and looked the same. A few icebergs had collected threateningly together in front of the opening. This was a typical situation where ice had accumulated in this bottleneck area. I found myself passing through a group of bergs crowded together. Luckily all of them stayed put and nothing broke off because I was not comfortable with being forced to pass so closely by them. For me this was "too close for comfort" had any of them shifted.

The opening did not look like an opening from my position, it just looked like another dent in the shoreline that might amount to nothing. I should have stuck to the north side but it all looked the same and the passage from my cockpit appeared packed in with icebergs just enough to look like there was opening beyond them. This was just another example of how everything looks the same because there is no depth of perspective this far north in unfamiliar territory. The only key to depth perception is color shift where dark brown in the foreground lightens up and fades into blues which become lighter and lighter, ending as powder blue. Lack of depth perception is annoying and is not a good feeling and yet there it is clear as day on the map right in front of me.

As I passed the cluster of icebergs, I made my way through the narrows, which were about 100' wide, and was well on my way inside the bay. I came across a group of ten or more eider chicks standing on some shallow rocks, something these birds commonly do. As soon as they saw me they instantly jumped into the water and swam for safety. They were unable to fly yet. Around the corner were about six nesting guillemots. Another mile heading around south on some high cliff faces was a well established colony of glaucous gulls crying their alarms to notify anyone within miles of my presence as they flew over me. The closer I got the noisier they became and the more threatening they became as they swooped over me, typical of aggressive gulls.

Continuing east I made my way into the shallow backwaters to look at the glacial terminus where the topography flattened completely out resolving into boring mud and shallow bog. I decided not to bother with taking the risk of stepping out and sinking up to my eyeballs in the mud, which is probably rock flour. I could not think of any exciting reason to get out and wander around. Maybe because it was an overcast day everything just looked uninteresting.

I recalled an old experience of stepping into some rock flour mud near the Orpit in Laksefjorden and finding that the bottom was just ever so slightly, hopelessly soft. Only the rocks beneath kept me from disappearing into grey brown fluffy goo. The trick was getting my booties out after they have been sucked off my feet.

Once in Stony Creek, Connecticut, where I live, I stepped into some pitch black, organic anoxic goo and the only way out was to slump into my kayak, pull my feet out of my boots and then pull my boots back out with the most heroic effort. Believe me I did not try that again! And I realized how dangerous soft bottoms actually may be.

Moving on, I paddled for a change along the north side where I found a pair of glaucous gull parents with two young. One could fly a short distance and the other was just about able to fly. Because they couldn't fly, as they had probably just left their nest, I was able to get quite close to them to shoot video, glad to have this unique opportunity so close to them. Had these nearly mature chicks been able to fly I would have never had the chance getting close to any glaucous gulls on the water, although when flying the adults like to swoop low from above.

Unfortunately I saw no Miteqsiorakitsoq (king eider *Somateria spectabilis*), yet there had been many in the icefjord on the south side of Puguta Island, I do hope I will get to see more of them. I saw a few Oqut-suit or Oqaatsoq, Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*. They are everywhere if there are any easy to catch fish about. They are just those unmistakable ugly shags, just as we have in Connecticut.

Now I was glad that I had my rudder. I lowered it into the water just deep enough to give me directional control. I was very pleased that this time I had loaded my kayak as lightly as possible in the bow. Such wonderful paddling, my kayak paddled effortlessly at about 2.6-2.7mph according to my GPS. I did not have to work all that hard, paddling in synchrony with the very slightly riffled water. Coming out of the bay into Qarfigssuit heading toward Inuvik seemed so easy, just a nothing paddle, because now I knew what the iceberg cluster was all about and I could see straight down the passages in either direction so that I knew where I was and where I was going.

I saw a couple of motorboats passing by the east side of Manitoq Island and I heard one pull in and stop. I was too lazy to look through my binoculars to see what was over there but I could dimly make out that there were some ramps over there. Probably the boat had pulled into one of those landing areas. The high cliffs shrouded that shore in dark shade. Bruce Simpson told me where they had camped on Inuvik. I thought that I might as well plan to camp in that area as well, but I noticed a very forbidding cluster of numerous large icebergs just about where they had camped. Some of them appeared to me to be grounded out. I decided I did not want to sleep that close to those icebergs.

On my way south, I could see the ice-cap southeast from me the Upernavik glacier about 18-19 nautical miles from me. The ice-cap on the horizon is distinctive because it has a unique but eerie brilliant white glow nothing else has. What also gives it away is the nunataqs or isolated pieces of land projecting through it.

As I paddled south the high rock faces suddenly gave way to a long shoreline of nearly flat rock ramp. I use the term suddenly because I was expecting the usual inhospitable rocky shores to just continue. I was very surprised when I came across very shallow granite ramp that extended for a mile south. Being mindful I needed to have water avail-



able at my campsite, I paddled along until I spotted some water running down from the very flat marshy land above. As I evaluated my options, I decided that getting the boat up the shallow angled ramp would not be all that bad. All I would have to do is just keep switching the rollers from back to front as they rolled out from under the stern.

I realized that I needed to tie my boat to a large stable rock. At the beginning of the ramp shoreline I saw nothing more than some insubstantial little rocks half buried in loose muddy dirt, rocks I did not want to risk tying my boat to. The edge of the ramp was bordered by a 2'-3' high lip of tundra which I did not want to heist my kayak up onto. I figured that I could risk leaving my kayak on the granite ramp because the distance up the ramp was great enough and there was nearly no seaweed at the top of the ramp indicating the high tide line.

A couple of hundred feet further on I found some large 3'-6' boulders with a couple of loops of motorboat lines already tied around them. With those lines available I knew that this meant that others had used this place before me, which always means good luck to me. Of course, if a storm came in the waves would just roll right up the ramp but I thought that the weather would probably remain stable. Storms in the summer most often roll in from the west.

The west facing site was delightfully sunny and to the east was flat low marsh. I figured that the sun would be probably bright the next morning, providing good exposure for my solar panel recharging system. Because of this convenient four sided exposure to the sun I planned to recharge my batteries throughout the night, moving the solar panel as the sun moved to maintain the best exposure to the sun. As there is not enough light at night for my solar panel to recharge my battery I will switch to another battery and I hope that #4 battery was recharged at least somewhat. I happen to wear Velcro closure boots so that I can easily slip them on at any time and go out for a walk as necessary. I don't like to bother myself with any thing any more complex than necessary when I am temporarily awakening from sleep and expect to go back to sleep as

soon as possible. I also wear Gore Tex pants and jacket so that it does not matter if I kneel or sit down on wet ground.

I knew that I would have to figure out how to sleep with the battery inside my sleeping bag next to me without accidentally detaching the connection to the solar panel when I rolled over. That was a minor problem and I reminded myself that I would just keep track of every time I rolled over from one side to the opposite side so that I did not wind up encircled by the cord.

From my boat and campsite I had to walk down the shore some distance before I could find water. At the spring, as I sat down to gather water, I spotted a birch tree. I couldn't believe it, but there it was for real. I looked at the stones and found bright orange feldspar, something I had seen on the back side of Aappilattoq Island years ago. That was exciting. These I found at my third campsite at N73°02'17" W55°11'08".

Water dripped off my paddle shaft into my lap and, as I was paddling with the cameras out of their drybags on my lap at the ready, I had to find way to keep these drops off them. I put a piece of dry pack cloth (non-woven rayon) over them to catch these paddle drips. Another problem with cameras underway is that when tying them inside the cockpit I have to be concerned about entangling my feet in the tie down lines.

The original zipper on my tent was a lightweight coil zipper. It was a good thing that at home I had sewn on a second heavier duty toothed zipper as the original coil zipper failed after only two nights. Even though the coil zipper is self repairing, I already knew from past experience that I would not trust it to withstand a 40 knot windstorm, which I always experienced some time on each of my trips.

Where I chose to camp there were few icebergs. To the southeast in the next inlet there were many loud disintegrating bergs, exploding in the yellow sunlight with many big bangs and booms sounding like thunder and cannon. I was very glad I stopped a safe distance from these threatening icebergs.

On my way here across the bay I did not stop at Inuvik because there were too many

large icebergs packed in there. I stopped before it. Bruce Simpson and his family had stopped and camped in the Inuvik area two years ago. He found that icebergs constantly moved about, making an open area in one moment and completely clogged the next time. Looking at those bergs next to the shore I decided that I did not want to be anywhere near them. I could hear them rumbling all night and was most glad that they were not just offshore nearby but a few miles away.

The photo shows the southeast end of Manitsaq Island and in the foreground is Inuvik and the peninsula I will round tomorrow on my way to visit the glacier in Akugdlukavsaup alangua fjord. Weird, I did not see the mountains on Nutarmiut I thought I was seeing, they were only the clouds coming in from the outside bringing in fog, cumulonimbus clouds, which were strange for Greenland because it is very rare for there to ever be a thundershower in this region. These cumulus clouds soon disappeared and there was mist between the mountains across the way on Manitsaq Island.

In the photo is the peninsula with the bunched up icebergs. I have rounded north of here just after the bay opening on Qagssersuaq peninsula and above that is the high peak of 1080 meters named Qagsserssui where clouds are just starting to show. This is a situation when knowing exactly where you are and using the sextant to sight with for measuring angles will tell you what you are looking at. Clouds started to form on the 1080 meters peak, Qagsserssui Peak and a lower peak Nuniat qaqarsuaq, 1023 meters with snow patches on Qagsserssuaq peninsula. To the left in the foreground are Manitsaq and Puguta islands, where I started out from earlier today.

Interestingly I saw two halos around the sun, one at 18:00 and the second at 21:00. Both were single halos. I am not sure what the halo around the sun means.

Now it gets to be fun because mist is coming over the water.

Guess what next? Glad I am settled in my tent and the tide is up.

(To Be Continued)





# Lost and Found, by Charlie Hitchen

Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising* – Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association UK - [dinghycruising.org.uk](http://dinghycruising.org.uk)

*The whimsical wanderings of Nora through Loch Melfort and the Islands of Nether Lorn.*

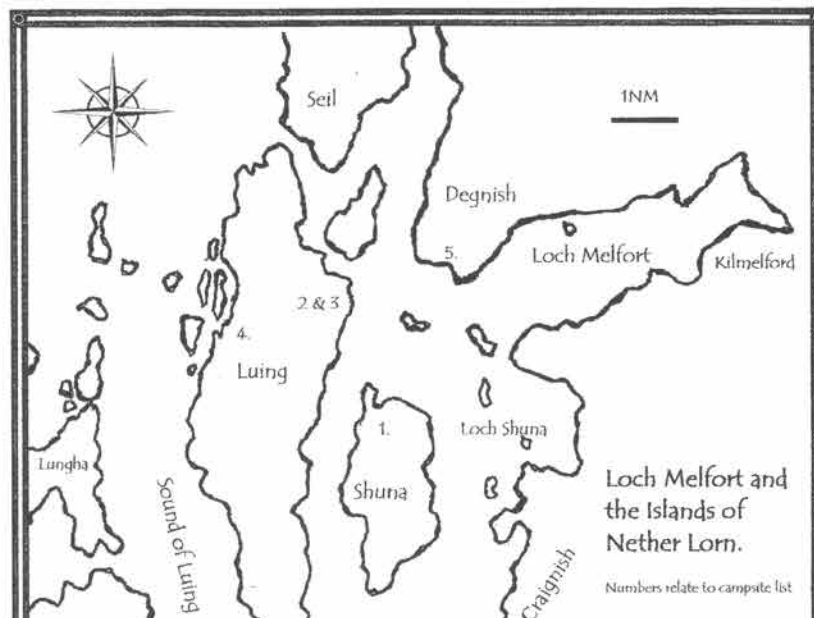
**T**he literature extolled the many virtues of Loch Melfort: stunning scenery, rich history and 'well-sheltered' sailing. The chart suggested otherwise, as the area lies in the midst of some of the most notorious tidal channels in British waters: Dorus Mor, the Sound of Luing, the Grey Dogs, Cuan Sound and the Gulf of Corryvreckan. But its appeal to us was utterly irresistible. We had spent a winterful of cold, dark nights poring over the charts, maps and pilot books and had immersed ourselves in the fascinating history of the area.

Well-sheltered? From our 'campsite' in a layby near Arduaine Gardens, it looked anything but well-sheltered. The loch was a writhing mass of white water and our car and dormitory, a faithful Mondeo Estate, was heeling over on its suspension in the gale, making an exit by a windward door utterly impossible. Sailing was out of the question for the moment and our late afternoon walk – nay, fight, – around the head of Loch Na Cille revealed a number of yachts which had been torn from moorings and lay flung up on the shore like stranded whales, strange victims of the 100mph storms of the week before. The fact that we were now experiencing a mere shadow of those gales provided us with ample food for thought. Thankfully, the forecast was for better and so we trailed *Nora*, our 40 year-old, ex-sailing school Wayfarer, around to Kilmelford Yacht Haven. Soon she was rigged, ready and securely lashed down to her trailer to await a better day.

We had no plan, or rather our plan was to wander, as simple as that. Trips that are driven by the pursuit of a definite objective have a nasty habit of failing in their own terms. You can't really fail to wander, unless, of course, you fail to come back.

**Day One. Monday 30th May 2011. Forecast: W F5 decr. SW F 3–4**

We made no rush to launch. The wind was still gusting strongly and we spent some time peering out at the weather trying to estimate the wind speed and sea state. At around 10:00hrs, things seemed to have died down to a brisk F4 and we decided to launch. The excellent people at the yacht haven oversaw the stowage of car and trailer as we slid *Nora* into the water and loaded provisions for six days. As we left the yacht haven at 11:00hrs, the salvage boat was leaving Loch Na Cille on a journey to recover the storm-stranded yachts.



It was a great beat up the inner part of Loch Melfort, sheltered as we were from the worst of the wind by Arduaine Point. The wind increased to F5 as we passed out into Loch Shuna and so did the wave height. We decided to pass north of Eilean Coltair so that we could gain shelter from it. Soon we were fairly blasting along, so much so that the wind – or apparent wind anyway – tore off my hat and flung it into the sea. Bernie performed a nifty 'hat overboard' manoeuvre, but sadly it had vanished beneath the waves. It was not the first hat of mine to find its rest in Davey Jones's locker and I dare say it will not be the last. Bernie offered the view that I have so many hats down there that there is scant room for any of Davey Jones's kit.

I was feeling the cold, particularly with no hat and a distinctly limited supply of hair and so we landed just west of Kilchoan at 13:15 to dig out a replacement hat, have a brew and to pull down a reef. It warmed the soul to be sitting on a beach again with the Kelly Kettle roaring away. We had a chance to sit back and drink in the views. The landscape stunned us, not only by its beauty but also by its distinctiveness from our old stamping grounds in Loch Etive to the north. Perhaps the reason for the



by granites and rhyolites; here we sailed amongst the Slate Islands as evidenced by the grey slabs strewn around on the beach.

The wind called us back onto the loch and we headed in the direction of Shuna. Maybe we might camp there for the night given our late start. Our course upwind looked to be a choppy and a wet one and after consulting the chart we decided to reach off towards Degnish Point until we were downwind of Shuna and to beat up in the lee of the island, avoiding the worst of the wind and the chop. This we duly did, enjoying an exhilarating sail even with the reef in place.

As we approached the island, the wind dropped to F2 and we made for the prominent bay on the northern tip of Shuna just east of Rhub an Aoil. It was about 15:30 when we entered it, a tranquil, shallow lagoon of sand and star-fishes complete with the romantically situated wreck of *The Maid of Luing*. Any cloud there had disappeared and the sun came blazing out. In the lee of the island, the weather felt positively tropical. We explored the head of the inlet for a camping site but all was damp and marshy after the storms. Bernie spotted a ruined stone quay on the west side of the bay, at the site of an former lime kiln operation. (Rhub an Aoil actually means 'Lime-plaster Point' in Gaelic.) We moored *Nora* up to the quay with a kedge holding her off. The kiln and the surrounding buildings must have buzzed with activity once, but now they had tumbled into disuse. Time had softened them, giving them the appearance of some sort of Doric ruin. Adjacent to this was a lush, grassy campsite with a breathtaking view. We pitched with the door facing north toward Seil Sound and soon had a brew on.

The disordered blocks of the quay, over which many weary feet must have toiled in the past, provided comfortable tables and chairs for a memorable barbeque as evening fell. The wind dropped completely and silence surrounded us ... that is



*Lunch stop on Luing, Day 2*

fine sight indeed. Bernie spotted a number of small white sails in the distance up toward Clachan. They seemed small enough to be dinghies, but just like Dougal (in *Father Ted*) we could not tell whether they were 'small or far away'. The evening swallowed them and after a wonderful sunset and some splendid star-gazing, we took to our beds.

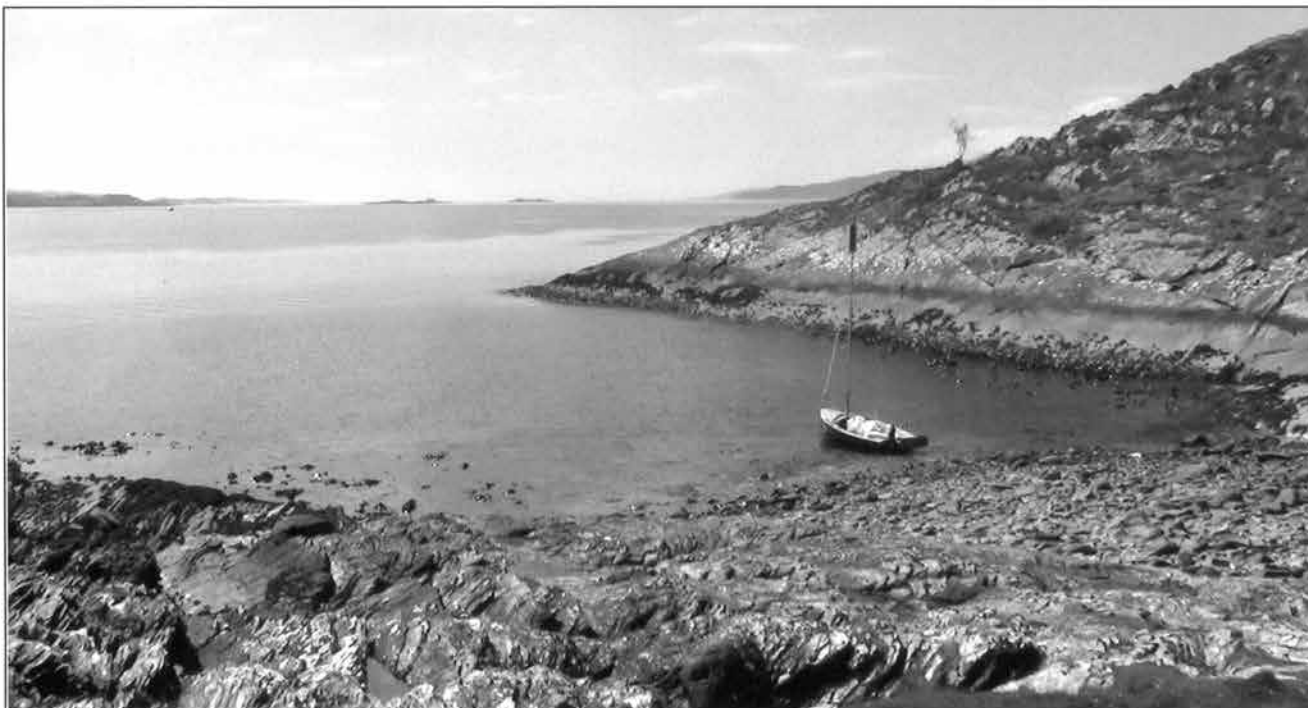
**Distance covered 9 Nm. Total Distance 9 Nm**

**Day Two. Tuesday 31st May 2011. Forecast: W F4; F5 later.**

We were packed and away by 10:00. The day seemed set fair with bright morning sunshine and the forecast was favourable. A clockwise circumnavigation of Shuna seemed a worthwhile endeavour. With a F3 breeze from the west, the reach down the east side of Shuna was a fairly gentle affair. The island looked appealing with its sandy bays and wooded shores giving it an almost Mediterranean aspect. We rounded the point and set off along the south coast of the island: a wilder and more starkly beautiful shore with jagged rocks and fewer potential boltholes. In the distance, we could see the olive green tip of Luing and beyond it the great maw of the Gulf of Corrywreckan.

We were beating now and were surprised to see a number of small white sails round Shuna Point and run swiftly down toward us. As they drew nearer, we were amazed to recognise them as friends and fellow members of the Open Canoe Sailing Group: Keith, Dave S, Dave P, Gavin and Jeff. These were clearly the small sails Bernie had spotted the evening before. We tacked across their path, hove-to, jumped up and down in the boat and hailed them to attract their attention. God only knows what they must have thought! The canoeists were travelling at some speed and we were unsure as to whether they fully recognised us before they sped on towards Loch Melfort. I never fail to be moved by the beauty of the delicate improbability of a sailing canoe in such a setting. *Nora* seemed like a battleship amongst them. And yet part of that





*Lunch stop on the south coast of Shuna looking south to the Sound of Jura*

We, meanwhile, entered the more sheltered waters of Shuna Sound. The wind had veered into a north-easterly and so we were beating once more. The passage up the sound was again wonderfully exhilarating sailing under a clear blue sky. Having sailed around Shuna in good time, we pulled into a shallow bay on the east shore of Luing, just south of Ardinamir for lunch and to catch the inshore waters forecast on the VHF. The forecast was not good news. The rest of the day promised to be fair, but low pressure in the west was set to bring F6–7 winds and rain on the morrow. We needed a sheltered campsite and somewhere to anchor the boat out of the wind.

We plugged on up Seil Sound, poking our heads into Cuan Sound to explore the island of Torsa. Nothing there seemed suitable and so we headed north and rounded Eilean Torna off the village of Balvicar, but again could find no campsite to fire the imagination.

The wind was increasing. We dragged in a reef and returned south into Loch Shuna, having discussed the possibility of returning to our campsite of the night before. There at least we would be able to tuck *Nora* into the shallow upper reaches of the lagoon where she would be able to dry out on sand. On the way, we decided to poke our noses into the Ardinamir anchorage but met fluky winds gusting through from Cuan Sound and only succeeded in clonking our centreboard. As we retreated, we were hailed from the shore. It was the canoe sailors who had found a sheltered spot in Bagh Lachlainn, just south of Ardinamir and were also digging in for what promised to be a wild day on the morrow. We landed and asked if they minded us joining them as we were

About 100 metres south of their site was a bay with a clearing reef to the south. We tucked *Nora* right into the bight of the bay and laid out two anchors and a land line. These held her in place over a patch of sand on which she could dry out. Satisfied that she looked safe enough, we pitched quickly, rigged up a tarp between two trees and spent an excellent evening around the campfire in the company of the OCSG lads as the clouds thickened overhead.

**Distance covered 18.5Nm Total Distance 27.5Nm**

### **Day Three. Wednesday 1st of June, 2011.**

I woke up, muttered, 'White rabbits', listened to the wind and rain on the tent, rolled over and slept on. As forecast, the day was pretty foul. Later, we joined the OCSG boys for a walk across the island in the hunt for 'a brew and a bun', a long-standing and marvellously noble OCSG tradition. Bernie thought they had no chance, but she had grossly underestimated the bun-stalking capacities of the elite canoe sailor. Eventually, brews and buns were brought to ground in Cullipool Post Office. From the door of the shop, we were afforded a view of the Sound of Luing which we thought we might visit later in the trip. Conditions in the sound on that day were hardly suitable for a dinghy, or much else for that matter. Wind and tide were doing battle out in the channel around the Fladda Light and the sound was white with turbulence.

In the company of Jeff, Bernie and I wandered northwards through the slate quarries beyond Cullipool. The extent of this industry is all too





the grey, shadowy wrecks of islands such as Belnahua, half-hidden in the scudding mists to the west of Fladda, a whole island almost obliterated in the quest for slate. We continued around the north point of Luing, taking in impressive views of Cuan Sound in full flood en route. It was by now a bleak and drizzly evening which made an early night an easy choice.

**Day Four. Thursday 2nd June, 2011.**  
**Forecast: SW F4 dec F2 or less later.**

The day started dull and grey and we waved goodbye to the canoe sailors as they set off through Cuan Sound towards Easdale and beyond. Again I was moved by the beauty of these craft and the enviable skills of their helmsmen. We took our time and launched at 11:00 crossing quickly east to Degnish Point to fill up on water. The wind was still F4 from the southwest and afforded us an exciting beat up the Sound of Shuna. However, as we passed Tobernoch, it died. Reluctant to use the motor, we pulled into Bagh Nah Aird, a deep bay close by the south point of Luing for bacon and egg butties: always a good morale booster.

We walked out onto the headland to gaze across the mouth of the Sound of Luing to Scarba and Lunga. The place looked ideal for camping, but it was only 18:00 and we felt that we had covered too little ground that day. It was approaching slack water and we reluctantly decided to use the motor to push on towards Cullipool

and to make for Poll Ghorm – the famous 'Back o' the Pond' anchorage.

The sea was like a plate of smoked glass as the sun fell towards the bulk of Scarba and for a breathless instant it seemed that the entire sound was in a state of rest. The light was fading fast as we located the southern entrance to the Poll Gorm anchorage and slid inside. It was perhaps as well, for already the Sound was beginning to roughen as the tide began to turn. Within an hour, we would be able to hear the tide pouring between the islands of the sound, but by then *Nora* was lying peacefully at anchor, the tent was up and the evening drinks had been poured in celebration of the sunset of a lifetime.

**Distance covered 10Nm Total distance 37.5Nm**

**Day Five: Friday 3rd June 2011. Forecast Var F2; SW F4–3 later**

We woke at 05:30. The logical thing would have been to continue north and maybe make our way through Cuan Sound. But in the true spirit of wanton aimlessness, we decided to take advantage of the ebb tide to return south back down the Sound and to cross south of Shuna to explore the Craignish coast north of the Dorus Mor. The sun was still well down behind

*Sunset 'Back o' the Pond'*







*The anchorage at Degnish Point*

the bulk of Luing as we hauled anchor and set off under motor. It was a lovely, quiet morning and so, at the slightest hint of wind, we hoisted sail and cut the motor. We drifted around the southern tip of the island and then a light breeze sprang up and gently pushed us across Shuna Sound.

At 10:45 we anchored off a conspicuous bay, unnamed on the 1:25 000 OS map, just west of the south-eastern corner of Shuna. A late and leisurely breakfast was duly taken and we took the time to explore some of the rocky inlets around the coast. By 12:00 the wind began to fill in from the south to give a very pleasant and steady F3 and we set off on a close reach to Bagh Dail Na Ceann on the Craignish coastline.

We spent the afternoon wandering south down the coast, exploring cairns and ring-marked rocks. There has been much debate about the meaning of these Neolithic artworks. Standing by them on a cloudless day with the sound of the tide pouring through the Dorus Mor clearly audible, it is all too easy to read them as expressions of the circularity and connectedness of things: 'the recurrent end of the unending' maybe. We threw away an hour or so dodging around the black rocks of Achanarnich Bay looking for possible campsites, but without much success. By 16:30 the wind was rising and it was still only late afternoon. The possibility of an evening sail was too tempting. We had to be back at Kilmelford on the morrow and so decided to take advantage of the tide and return north to Degnish Point, a place which had impressed us when we had stopped there for water earlier in the trip.

And what a glorious sail it was: a fast, swooping, broad-reach back up the Sound of Shuna. Although the idea of anchoring on a point seemed ill-advised, we found a sheltered anchorage for *Nora* in a fine, sandy-bottomed pool behind a little skerry which seemed good enough, given that the forecast was

for light winds overnight. It looked as though the pool dried, but a quick calculation confirmed that *Nora* would be afloat at our intended departure time in the morning. A stream bubbling with fresh water flowed into the pool at the side of a flat and grassy campsite. Perfect!

Later, we clambered along the rocky coast to the fortress of Dun Fadaidh with its spectacular views over the Islands of Nether Lorn. These islands and channels, strangers to us a week ago, now appeared as friends and we enthusiastically pointed out the places we had visited and those we had not. As the light began to fade, we noted the cloud which had begun to spill over the whale's back of Scarba off to the south-west – the sign of cold weather approaching.

**Distance covered 18Nm Total distance 45.5Nm**

**Day Six. Saturday June 4th 2011. Forecast S F3; F4 later**

The day dawned cloudy and a good deal colder than the day before but the wind was F3 southerly as forecast. We retrieved *Nora* from her pool and set off at 10:00. We had fancied the look of the sandy bays on the east coast of Shuna and so decided to make for Poll na Gille. We landed there, but the noise from the generator of a fish farm lying off the bay was distracting and so we sailed on, passing the rocky outcrop of Eilean Gamhna as we headed back into Loch Melfort proper.

It was distinctly cold now and we landed at Bagh na Dalach for a brew and to pile on more clothes. I cooked a batch of delicious mussels I had gathered. These we supplemented with a bowl of jam pudding and custard (!) pretty much the last grub we had left. As we launched again, we realised that this would be our last bit of sailing on what had been a truly memorable trip.



Team Nora at at Bagh Nah Aird

The path of our GPS track was like a ball of string. We had indeed wandered where impulse had taken us and we were glad of it. Whatever objective we had started out with had been lost overboard somewhere on the way, along with my hat. So many times we have found the same thing: that the experience of an open boat journey often overturns the apparent purpose of the trip and that a point is reached where, as the poet suggests: "... what you thought you came for is only a shell, a husk of meaning."

The journey back up into Loch Melfort was filled with chat. We talked about what we had seen and learned and, as always, reviewed how we could improve our gear: maybe a longer shore line and a different arrangement for the storm jib. We also talked of areas to visit in the future and it was clear that Loch Melfort and the Islands of Nether Lorn would warrant further visits. As we sailed into the yacht haven, a Cornish Shrimper passed us on the way out. Lucky blighters!

Distance covered 8Nm Total distance 53.5Nm

#### Notes:

It was the last multi-day trip we made in *Nora*. Some months later, in a fit of temporary insanity, we sold her. She was bought by a nice young man who owns a house near Loch Melfort and planned to teach his children to sail there. I am sure she will be happy enough, but it was hard to see the old girl go. Within a month, we had bought another one!

#### Planning

For planning purposes, we used *Imray Chart C65: Crinan to Mallaig and Barra*. We also used OS 1:25 000 Explorer Series; Sheet 359, *Oban, Kerrera and Loch Melfort* and OS 1:50 000 Landranger Series; Sheet 55, *Lochgilphead and Loch Awe*.

In truth, the larger scale OS map was more useful on this coastal cruise than the chart. We used two pilot guides: *Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions – Kintyre to Ardnamurchan*, and *The Yachtsman's Pilot to Mull and Adjacent Coasts*, by Martin Lawrence.

Tidal information was downloaded from [easytide.ukho.gov.uk](http://easytide.ukho.gov.uk). Our GPS was loaded with six-figure OS grid references using the OS website *Get-a-map* which we found to be a most useful planning tool.

We found *Google Earth* useful to inspect possible anchorages, etc. There are masses of sources on the history of the area but a good starting point is <http://www.southernhebrides.com/hebrides-history.html>.

We also read the excellent *The Islands of Nether Lorn (West Highland Series 3)* by Mairi MacDonald. As always, Hamish Haswell-Smith's *The Scottish Islands* was an invaluable source of information. Chapter 14 of Walter MacDougal's *Journeying in MacDougal Country* is good for information on the Degrish area.

There is a mass of information about cup and ring-marked rocks. Information about the Achanarnich cup and ring site is given at:

<http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/22582/details/achanarnich/>

Details of canoe sailing can be found at [OCSG.org.uk](http://OCSG.org.uk) and on their facebook page.

#### Launch site

We launched and recovered in Kilmelford Yacht Haven. NM838125 <http://www.kilmelfordyachthaven.co.uk/>

Launching was free from the beach slipway. Car and trailer storage was £10 per week in 2011. CH

Overnight Anchorages. (see chart for location)

Night (see chart)	Place	Grid
1	Shuna	NM764099
2 & 3	Bagh Lachlainn	NM759188
4	Poll Gorm (Back of the pond)	NM735111
5	Degrish Point	NM744121







On April 1, 2014, the historic 1920 Chesapeake Bay buyboat, *Winnie Estelle*, arrived at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) in St Michaels, Maryland, where she will remain as the new workhorse of CBMM's floating fleet for scenic Miles River cruises and a wide variety of on the water educational programs.

The *Winnie Estelle* joins CBMM's floating fleet of historic boats, which includes the recently restored 1955 skipjack *Rosie Parks*, the 1889 nine log bugeye *Edna E. Lockwood*, the 1912 river tug *Delaware*, the 1909 seven log crab dredger *Old Point*, the 1934 dovetail *Martha*, the 1931 Potomac River dory boat and the 1961 tuck stern, Jackson-built *Pot Pie* skiff. The authentic buyboat replaces the museum's replica buyboat *Mister Jim*, which has operated as a passenger boat since 1982. The museum currently has the *Mister Jim* for sale.

"Back in March we began fundraising to acquire the *Winnie Estelle*," said CBMM President Langley Shook. "We are so fortunate that a generous donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, stepped right up to purchase her for an undisclosed amount to donate her to the Museum." CBMM will engage in fundraising to build an endowment to cover ongoing and long term maintenance of the historic buyboat.

The *Winnie Estelle* is expected to receive her US Coast Guard designation as a charter vessel to carry up to 45 passengers.

## Winnie Estelle Joins CBMM's Floating Fleet

A volunteer corps of USCG certified captains and their volunteer crew will operate the vessel, with the museum's boatyard handling *Winnie's* upkeep and maintenance.

The *Winnie Estelle* will be used by CBMM for drop in public cruises, student ecology tours, a floating classroom, private charters, weddings and more. Beginning in May, scenic Miles River cruises on the *Winnie Estelle* will be offered Fridays through Mondays.

The *Winnie Estelle* was built in Crisfield, Maryland, by Noah T. Evans in 1920. She's nearly 65' in length overall with a 17' beam and a 3½' draft, making her easily maneuverable in shallow water destinations. She displaces 42 tons and is powered by a Caterpillar Diesel. *Winnie* was used as a workboat on the lower Chesapeake for more than 50 years, carrying seafood and produce to market across the Chesapeake Bay. In the 1970s she made Belize her port of call, where she operated as an island trader, carrying lumber from Honduras to Belize, and later as a charter boat for divers. In early 2012, Michael Whitehill of Centreville, Maryland, purchased the boat, returning her to the Chesapeake Bay on June 17, 2012, with a first stop

in Deltaville, Virginia, where she was greeted by a cheering crowd of onlookers.

A Chesapeake Bay buyboat was historically used for buying and selling seafood. Buyboats purchased oysters or fish from watermen in remote parts of the Chesapeake and carried the fresh catch to city markets or seafood packing houses. According to Larry Chowning, author of the book *Chesapeake Bay Buyboats*, beginning in the early 20th century motor buyboats were generally about 40' to 100' in length with a mast and boom forward of the hold, a pilot house aft and the hull decked over. Depending on their function, similar boats were called freight boats, run boats or crab dredgers and also called deck boats or mast boats. With her bottom built in deadrise fashion like most other wooden workboats used by the watermen and historically used for buying crabs and fish, the *Winnie Estelle* is a typical example of the type, though she is rare for surviving in such an unaltered fashion.

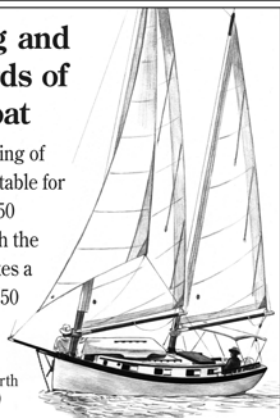
"The *Winnie Estelle* is the finest restoration of a Chesapeake Bay buyboat that I have ever seen," commented Naval architect Melbourne Smith when he visited Belize and sailed aboard the *Winnie Estelle*. Melbourne was the overseer of the construction of the sailing vessels *Californian* and *Pride of Baltimore II*. Melbourne visited Belize seeking the same Belize lumber utilized on the *Winnie Estelle* for these ships.

For more information, visit [www.cbmm.org](http://www.cbmm.org).

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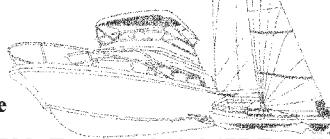
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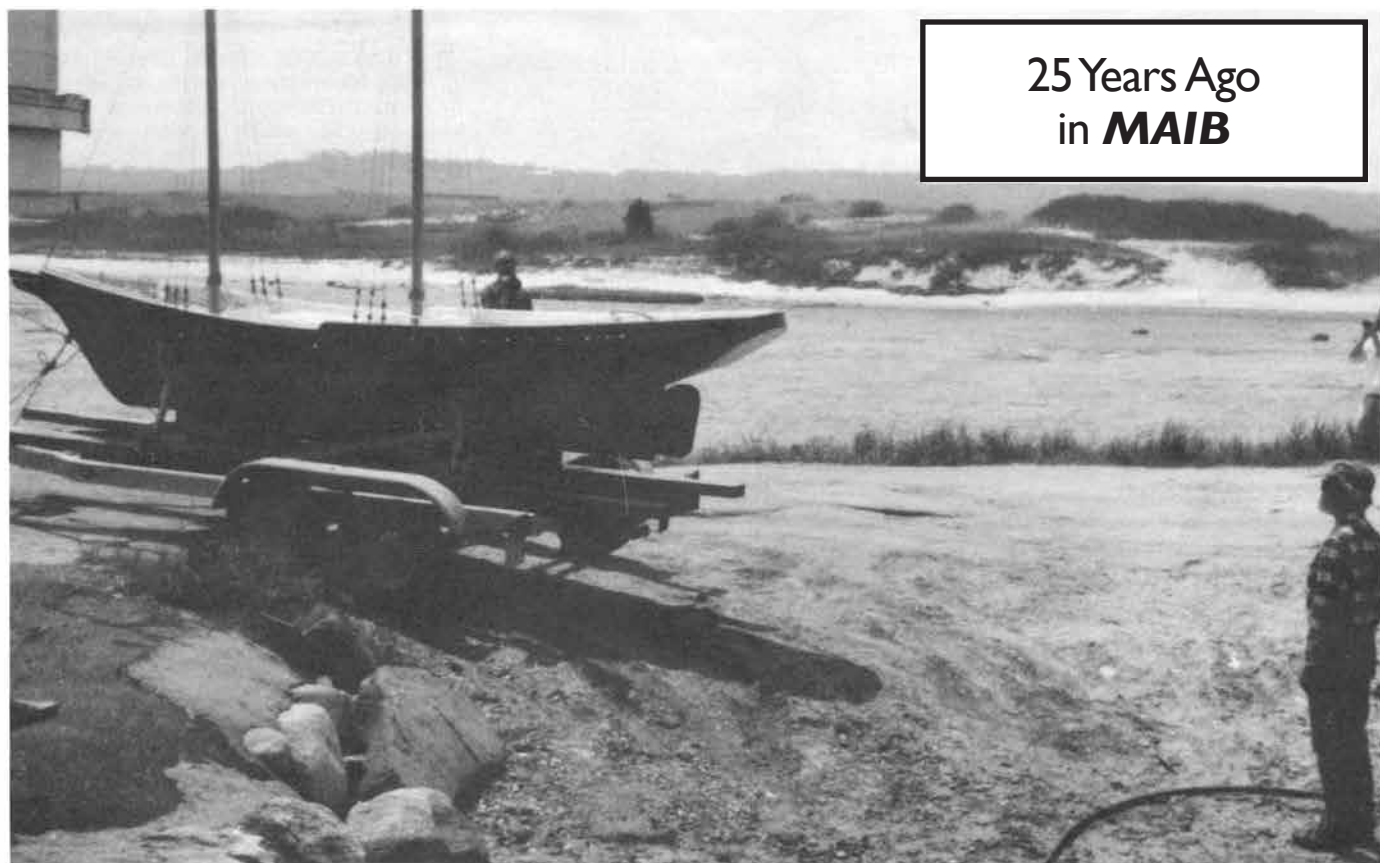
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## The Launching of the "Effie M. Morrissey, Jr."

There was a boat launching on May 14th at the tiny harbor of Mememsha in the town of Chilmark on the western end of Martha's Vineyard. A rather unusual boat was launched, which is why we journeyed down to the island to take it in. Fred Littleton had spent parts of the last couple of winters building this one and it was pretty special to him, for it was an 18' scaled down miniature of the famous arctic exploration schooner used by Capt. Bob Bartlett, the "Effie M. Morrissey". In 1940, Fred, then 15, had journeyed with Capt. Bartlett on the "Morrissey" on her last arctic exploration trip under sail, as one of the "Morrissey" kids. Bartlett padded out his crews with volunteer youth, sort of like sail training ships today.

Now a half-century later, Fred is a retired Philadelphia lawyer (really, he is) who occupies himself in Chilmark as the town harbormaster and shellfish warden. Two full time jobs in summer. With summer just about to begin, Fred was keen to get the "Morrissey Jr." into the water while he still had time available. Even as he squirmed belowdecks through the opening where the front deckhouse was removed so he could install 300 pounds of lead ballast, a "yachtsman" and his wife came by and started asking all about moorings and so on for the summer. Today, Fred was not to be diverted by

business, so he told the yachtsman he was too busy right now to discuss the subject.

The "Morrissey Jr." is a big ship model, big enough at 18' for Fred to get aboard and sail her, once she's fully rigged. The "cockpit" is formed by removing the rear deckhouse. With nobody on board, the "Morrissey Jr." looks like the real thing seen from a distance. This is because Fred built her from the original lines used by the Tarr Yard in Essex, Massachusetts back in 1894 when the original was built. For construction details and rig, Fred relied on photos and his own memories, plus on-board checking on the "Morrissey" herself, today owned by the Commonwealth and berthed in New Bedford and known as the "Ernestina".

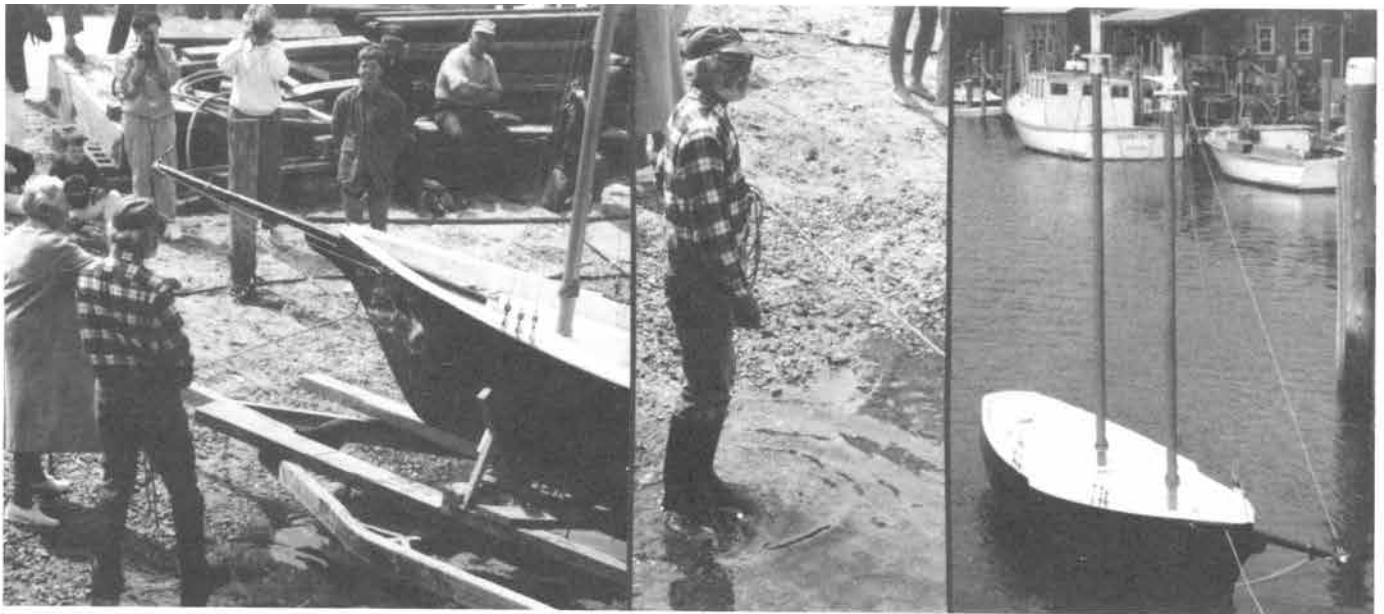
The launching was quite a family occasion, with four of Fred's five grown children, their spouses, and several grandchildren, traveling to the Vineyard from as far away as Virginia for the weekend. Doing the christening honors was Fred's mother, now in her 80's and seemingly pleased at Fred's notion. When I asked her how she had felt about little Fred going off to Greenland at 15, she told me she hadn't been too concerned, it was something he'd set his mind on and that was that. Now here he was 50 years later still messing about with this schooner and here she was still going along with his whims.

They're on the Vineyard because the family had summered there for years and she had purchased the home Fred now lives in year round as a summer place after years of renting.

The launching attracted a crowd of over 100 friends and neighbors, and was accomplished by floating the "Morrissey Jr." off its cradle on a trailer after Fred's mother had splashed the bows with champagne. The "Morrissey Jr." floated high on her lines, Fred had figured she'd need 600 pounds of lead and he'd only gathered up half that by launching time, melted into small pigs in aluminum pie plates and cupcake cups. When he gingerly stepped aboard at the dockside, she was tender indeed, and when he settled into the "cockpit", she was well down by the stern. The extra lead would be heavily weighted forward. The two masts were in, but Fred had not been able to finish the gaffs and booms, so no sailing trials would be possible. Just as well without sufficient ballast.

She didn't leak. No reason why she should, but Fred was wondering if he'd overlooked something and he'd find out what when water fountained into the hull. Once it was determined that all was well, the crowd gathered around the party buffet set up on an adjacent spot, and another familiar launching ceremony aftermath was enjoyed





by all.

Fred will sail the "Morrissey Jr." on Menemsha Pond, a protected tidal pond roughly a mile square, inland from the gut where the harbor opens onto Buzzards Bay. He's no stranger on that body of water, for he's sailed his 16' square rigger built a few years ago there, once sailing out of an early morning fog and spooking some hungover yachties who'd partied the night away at anchor in the pond.

Fred was somewhat disappointed that the hoped for appearance of the "Ernestina" herself off the har-

bor failed to happen. He's been very active in volunteer work on the schooner and has raised over \$10,000 himself for her welfare. But, even though she was scarcely a dozen miles away in New Bedford, she didn't turn up for the launching of her miniature replica.

Fred has applied for a position on the governing board that decides what the "Ernestina" will be used for under state ownership. "I figure they ought to have at least one of the "Morrissey Kids" on that board, and I'm one still active in boating right here in Massachu-

setts." The board members are appointed by the Governor, and since "Ernestina" was given to the Commonwealth by her last owners, Cape Verde Islanders, the board has been entirely made up of Cape Verdeans living in New Bedford.

So now Fred has his own "Morrissey Jr." to enjoy, he's captain, crew, chairman of the board, it's all his own. To relive a highlight of one's youth on the water in this fashion is a truly rewarding trip down nostalgia lane.

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

Fred contemplates going below to put the ballast in; "and another pig please"; rigging the masts with family help; just the right size for these lads.



# Rosie Parks FLOATS

by Dick Cooper

OysterFest started out more like a September day than a Saturday in November—warm and windless, the air fresh and clear. The campus of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum was scrubbed and painted and the Lady of Honor, the skipjack *Rosie Parks*, sat high on the marine railway overlooking the gathering crowd, a bouquet of red roses gracing her bowsprit. For most of the day, folks were queued up at the oyster-shucking tables, slurping down the Bay's bounty, judging an oyster-stew contest, or taking in the wares of the gathered vendors. It was like so many other fall festivals—but then it changed.

About 3:30 in the afternoon there was a quiet but noticeable movement toward the Boat Shop, the beating heart of the Museum. The crowd started to form along safety ropes lining the marine railway. Those who were savvy and quick enough had already taken up coveted places high above on the Hooper Strait Lighthouse's decks and cupola. After three years of painstaking work by shipwrights, apprentices, volunteers and even school children, the fully restored *Rosie Parks*, one of the most celebrated skipjacks in the Bay's oystering history, was being launched to resume her life as the Museum's floating ambassador.

"We counted over 4,500 people in attendance," Museum President Langley Shook said. "Which set an all-time record for a single day crowd in the almost 48 years since the Museum was founded. And we set it by a pretty good margin."

The crowd hushed as Museum dignitaries spoke about how the rebirth of the *Rosie Parks* had become a focal point for staff, volunteers, and visitors. They talked of how the project became a centerpiece to show off the time-honored skills the Museum has a mission to preserve. Former Board Chairman Joe Peters got a round of applause when current Chairman Tom Seip presented him with a beautiful, scale-model half hull of the *Rosie*. Peters is credited with being one of the strongest proponents for the rebuild in the face of stiff opposition by some who thought the old boat too far gone to bring back. They argued it would be a waste of good money with so many other projects needing funding; a point of view that most, if not all, have since reversed.



"Everything I have heard from every board member has been entirely positive," Shook said. "Those who were keen on the reconstruction saw it as a way to generate some excitement and be a unifying force to draw attention and energy to the Museum. Now that it is completed I can say that unquestionably it succeeded."





A view of the relaunch from the Hooper Strait Lighthouse. Photo by Tom Stevenson. Watch a video of the launch at [bit.ly/rosierelaunch](http://bit.ly/rosierelaunch).

Seeing *Rosie* on the railway that day, all gussied up with her colorful name boards, varnished brightwork, and crisp waterline, it was hard to recall a time when this queen of the oyster fleet had been a derelict hulk, rotting in her slip and in constant danger of sinking. When she was hauled to prevent that fate she instantly began falling apart.

In many ways she was a symbol of hard times at the Museum in the middle of the Great Recession and a constant reminder of the ill effects of years of deferred maintenance. *Rosie* was suffering from the common disease of her species, wood rot. Skipjacks were designed and built to be stable workstations for dredging oysters in the

days of sail power. Made of cheap local pine fastened to ribs of local oak, they were not built to last. Most skipjacks that were worked hard and put away wet did not survive much past 25 years. Their captains often felt it easier to have another built than to keep up the tedious and expensive repairs.

So how did *Rosie* make it to the

ripe old age of 59? To begin with, she had good bones and a style and grace uncommon in an oysterman's world of rough edges and quick fixes. And she had a name and pedigree that made her historically important to preserve, in order to protect the history of the Chesapeake Bay.

She was built in 1955 by Bronza Parks, a self-taught master craftsman whose southern Dorchester County boatyard in Wingate, MD, built hundreds of boats for more than three decades in the mid-20th century. Bronza built the skipjack for his older brother, Captain Orville Parks, who was known on the Bay as one of the best oystermen to ever sail a lick.

Bronza's life was cut short on May 13, 1958 when he was shot and killed by a mentally ill client over the cost of a custom boat being built. The murder case dragged through courts on both the Eastern and Western Shores for a decade, garnering front-page headlines at every legal twist. Captain Orville went on to win numerous skipjack races at the helm of the *Rosie Parks* and was named "Admiral of the Chesapeake" by then Governor J. Millard Tawes. In 1970, an ABC television show entitled "The Chesapeake Oystermen" featured him and the *Rosie Parks*. A news clip promoting the show said Captain Parks was "the embodiment of the skill, determination and courage demanded of this special breed of seamen."

On the advice of his doctor, Captain Orville got out of oystering at the age of 78 and sold the *Rosie* to the Museum in 1975. He died the next year just weeks after his 80th birthday.

The rechristening during the 2013 OysterFest took on a more spiritual tone as the Reverend Mark Nestlehutt, rector of Christ Church in St. Michaels, blessed the *Rosie* and led the crowd in prayer. There was silence while Mary Parks Harding, Bronza's daughter and

her son Pres Harding, and Sharon Weber and Tom Parks, Orville's grandchildren, climbed up on a platform at the bow of the skipjack. The petite Mrs. Harding was handed a large bottle of champagne wrapped in burlap. She took a two-handed swing at the bow with the bottle but it failed to break. That did not discourage the matriarch of the extended Parks family.

The crowd waited patiently while



(top) Bronza Parks. (bottom) Orville Parks.

she took four more cracks at the bow and then burst in cheers when the bottle exploded white foam over the skipjack like a wave. Sharon Weber stepped up to represent her branch of the family tree and fared a little better, breaking her bottle on the second try. As they stepped back, the *Rosie Parks* began to slide slowly down the railway as Arlinda Barnes—a vocalist from Trappe, Maryland with a soulful, rich voice—began singing, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." When Bronza was ready to launch a boat, he would

crank the handle on a fire engine siren mounted on the wall of his boat shop in Wingate and the residents of the hamlet would come out their homes, in from the fields and workboats to help. Several members of his crew were musicians and would pull out their guitars, fiddles, and mandolins and play gospel tunes as the boats were rolled down on large-wheeled wagons to the water's edge. When the tide was high enough to launch, they would sing Bronza's favorite song of all, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee."

The crowd let out another cheer when *Rosie's* rudder touched the water and later roared when she floated free in the harbor.

"I was thrilled during the entire ceremony," Mrs. Harding said. "I can't think of a greater tribute to Dad and Uncle Orville."

Throughout the afternoon, Theodore Cephas, a lean man with the weathered hands and face of a waterman and gray flecks in his beard and hair, watched quietly from the VIP tent next to the railway slip. Old friends and members of the Parks family who have known Cephas since they were children hugged him and made small talk. Cephas was Orville Parks' first mate on the *Rosie* and had worked her decks for 20 years side by side with the Captain; a man he said "could catch oysters on a state road."

When the *Rosie* was tied off securely along the dock, the assembled Parks family members stepped back making a path for Cephas. With a quick and practiced motion, he was on board the spotless white decks and headed straight for the helm. He reached a hand out and caressed the cabin top and then a thin smile crossed his lips as he touched a wooden spoke of the wheel, his eyes sparkling as if for only a moment he could see back over the decades.





(top row, from left) CBMM Chair of the Board Tom Seip (right) presents former Chair Joe Peters with a scale-model half hull of the *Rosie*. The crowd begins to gather. Pres Harding speaks before the relaunch. Photos by CBMM.

(middle row, from left) Pres Harding, Mary Parks Harding, Sharon Weber and Tom Parks rechristen the *Rosie*. Photos by Dick Cooper.

(bottom row, from left) The crowd cheered as the *Rosie* kissed the water. Photos by CBMM.



Theodore Cephas, first mate aboard the *Rosie* for more than 20 years, was the first person to step aboard the newly relaunched skipjack. Photo by Dick Cooper.

Watch the recap of the entire restoration project by DelmarvaLife at [bit.ly/RosieDelmarvaLife](http://bit.ly/RosieDelmarvaLife).

Man-o-War is still an active boat building island, the Albury family still build wooden sailing boats and they also have a fiberglass business building skiffs, which are sought after and are great sea boats.



We left Man-o-War on Saturday, March 15, after a pleasant stay and a ferry ride to Marsh Harbour on Great Abaco. We got sorted with a small sim card from BTC (Bahamas Tel Co).

We had bought a sim card in Grand Cay and it would only fit in Rodger's phone as they didn't have a "cutter" to make it fit in my new Android! So, after a trim my phone could receive the internet and local phone calls. Unfortunately it is not compatible with Rodger's computer so he cannot use it as a hotspot to get his emails! OH WELL!

We had a good sail from Man-o-War to Hope Town, where we were to meet an old friend from Nassau on Tuesday, March 18. We anchored outside the harbour and saw lots of turtles, more this year than ever. Hope Town has a small mooring field and most of the cruising boats seem to be permanently ensconced on their coffee grounds, but the town is charming, with attractive buildings, a great museum, post office and very friendly people.

A Core Sound 17 sailed around us and then the owner came back in a Boston Whaler to visit along with his Labrador "Rudder," a Mares look alike if ever I saw one. "Rudder" was invited aboard and made himself comfortable on the seat between the engine box and the cockpit coaming like an old hand! Syd has a Norwalk Island Sharpie as well as the Core Sound, he later visited us in Little Harbour in an ex racing Maine lobster boat! Boat mad in the best way.



I had decided to make bread dough from a recipe that our friend Roxy gave me, as you can see the container was not quite big enough! We had some good pizza cooked in a frying pan, foccacia and a not so good loaf cooked in a saucepan, but it was delicious tasting.

Come Monday, the wind had changed to the southwest and we decided to move down to White Sound Harbour, about five miles away from Hope Town. We went to the southeast corner and anchored in a tiny area which was practically landlocked at low tide, just big enough for *Presto!*

## Letter from *Presto!* #2 Cape Eleuthera, March 29

By Patty Marshall



*Presto!* in White Sound Harbour.

Tuesday we hitched a ride into town, Rodger got wifi, we posted some cards and had lunch at Capt'n Jacks. That afternoon squalls came through and, although we were a bit worried about *Presto!*, we knew that she would be safe in her little basin. We met up with Melissa and caught up with news of old friends and promised to meet again next time we come through the Bahamas. We got a ride straight away (Bahamians are very kind in picking up the odd looking people who are cruising through) and got back to *Presto!* to find that the squall was more local to Hope Town and it hardly rained where we were.

Next day we sailed down the lee of Elbow Cay, past Tilloo and Lynyard Cays to Little Harbour, a perfect circular harbor with a shallow bar at the entrance, but not a problem for a sharpie. There was a big sea running in the ocean, with 3-4 meter swells. We decided to wait a day for the wind to come round and the swells to diminish so in the morning we hitched to Cherokee Sound, about five miles down the coast, a very shallow area which has the longest wooden pier in the Commonwealth, 770' long.

Unfortunately a hurricane had destroyed the restaurant at the end of the pier and no yachts seem to go there as it is a calm weather anchorage, not good when there is a surge. The Settlement itself was quite amazing, very neat and tidy houses, gardens and streets, mostly white Bahamians with interesting accents, rather like old West Country accents from Devon or Cornwall in the UK.



A quiet street in tidy Cherokee Settlement.

Getting a lift back was a little more difficult as there was no traffic. We got a ride part way with two ladies and then a truck gave us a lift a little further and we walked the last mile, which gave us a nice view of *Presto!* at the bottom of the hill.



*Presto!* at Little Harbour.

Little Harbour is the home of the author of *An Artist on His Island*, Randolph Johnston, who was a famous sculptor, with bronze statues in Nassau and the foundry is still working in this tiny place. His son and grandson have taken over as Randolph died at the age of 88 in 1992. Walking around there are bronze statues of rays, sharks, birds and people everywhere to be seen and a gallery of his work and that of the sons. Quite an impressive family.

We had a great sail from Abaco to Spanish Wells, the large swells reminded us of sailing across the Atlantic, still 3-4 meters but no waves and a nice steady breeze from the northeast. We made good time and anchored off Meeks Patch, about four miles from town. Instead of going into town we had been invited to dock at Chris and Rachel Morejohn's one slip Marina on Russell Island immediately in front of their tiny waterfront house, "The Tight Spot."



*Presto!* in "The Tight Spot."

We tied up there for two days until the wind went to the southwest and then tucked into the basin and tied to the concrete wall. We were treated extremely well, filled up our water jugs, had showers, did laundry and ate some delicious meals. We had been there last time we were in Spanish Wells and, as usual, had a great time. We celebrated Rachel's birthday on March 25 and left the next day with a reefed fore and 25 kts of wind and a sloppy, short following sea, taking only an hour to do the eight miles to Current Cut. We went from sailing at 8.5 knots to 2 with the current against us. Soon though, we were out of the current and still trucking along, our destination for the night Pineapple Cays, which gave us a fair lee from the swell.

Left early the next day and sailed to Cape Eleuthera. We anchored in a landlocked basin which had been carved out in the '50s, someone's dream gone astray as happens in so many places in the Bahamian islands. Rodger had connections with the Island School and we met Chris Maxey, its founder, and Jason Kincaid and had a tour of the facility, very impressive and well worth checking out their website, [www.islandschool.com](http://www.islandschool.com). We have been here for three days of strong easterlies and tomorrow promises us fair winds to head for Cat Island.

More to come in a couple of weeks.





## Reports of Interest from the Delaware River Chapter TSCA

### Naperstek Kayak Progress

By Phil Maynard

Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*  
Newsletter of the Delaware River  
Chapter TSCA

Tom Sheppard had mentioned to our membership that there was a kayak frame looking for a new home. I inquired about it and arranged to take a look at it on February 23 (see *MAIB* May). I found the kayak to be well made and in good condition, although in need of refinishing and recovering. The sailing rig and seat back were missing but the frame was 100% intact with no rot or damage. I thought it a worthwhile project and so took it home.



The original builder's name is George Charles Naperstek and he is 93 years old. George Naperstek's son Paul and daughter Suzi were very happy to have their father's work continue on and asked that I acknowledge their father as the builder when talking about or showing the kayak, which I'm more than happy to do.

I got some additional info from Suzi Naperstek. "I told Dad you were taking the kayak and he told me some more about it.

The whole thing started with a paddle that my dad made in Boy Scouts, probably about '34-'35. It was a double ended kayak style paddle with a brass connector in the middle. He won second prize in a contest with it.

"There was a series of articles (probably over three months) around that time in *Popular Science* on making a canvas covered canoe, so he and his father started to build it in the attic of their house in North Hackensack, New Jersey. The ribs were made of hemlock and Dad and Grandpa had to fasten the boat upside down on the floor of the attic to keep them in shape as they dried. The cover was #10 canvas, painted with airplane dope, made just the same as early airplanes were. The dope made the canvas shrink as it dried so it would fit tightly.

"When it was time to take the canoe out of the attic there was only one way out, through the attic window. Grandpa got a very tall ladder, stood it up away from the house and rigged a pulley system so they could lower the boat to the ground. Dad did sail the thing, said it went like "a son of a gun." He drew a diagram for me of how they rigged it. It had an outrigger system because it would be too tippy otherwise, plus a steering system that had wires that went back to the rudder. He's writing down everything that he can remember about making and using the boat. Gives him a nice project to work on right now. He writes, 'Please send us pictures and keep us posted. Hope you enjoy these details. So nice to know that it will be cherished.'"

I hope to get this back in the water fairly soon in time for the spring season. I already have a very light cedar double ended paddle I put together from two half paddle rough blanks I picked up at the bid and buy some years back. I had to join them, finish shape and then varnish it. I may also recreate the sailing rig but that will come later.

#### Follow up April 12

I finished her this week and got her in the water yesterday on the Brandywine Creek. There was a pretty good current, maybe 2-3 knots with the rain we have had recently. I was able to make slow progress upstream and then fly back through some light rapids on the way back downstream. I rigged a temporary seatback and have to devise something permanent. Not sure I can actually squeeze two people in there but I'll have time to experiment. I never had any really calm water to get a good sense of her tracking and turning but she felt good on the water. I'm really looking forward to the next outing.

For covering I used the Dacron I had from Montfort's "Classic 12" kit that I will not be going ahead with and used his construction method as far as applying the Dacron with heat tape and then shrinking the Dacron with an iron. The material was not quite long enough so I spliced in the last 1'-2" at the stern section, which ended up being a little more work than I expected. I was unsure of what to coat the cloth with and ended up using two part urethane sold by [www.skinboats.org](http://www.skinboats.org), [http://](http://www.skinboats.org)

[www.skinboats.org](http://www.skinboats.org) in Washington State.

This is unlike anything I have ever worked with, it's 100% solids which means it does not shrink at all as it cures, and it's applied in three coats "wet on wet" without drying in between coats. Their suggested process is just keep going, mix a second batch for the second coat and then a third batch for the third coat and apply all three coats in a single sitting and then watch for drips as it cures. The cured material is closer to silicone than anything else I can think of so I really cannot do anything with it after it cures as far as sanding or fixing irregularities.

I started with the hull and then did the deck and the deck naturally came out much better after I learned what not to do on the hull. That's a job that requires turning the hull while working each side and have good lighting to see what I was doing and enough time to do it all in one shot. I did not have quite enough material and so it has two coats all over and three coats just on the center three "planks" of the bottom. Wherever the fabric touches the stringers it gets "glued" to the stringers as the urethane easily saturates the fabric and coats the stringers where the fabric touches them. That is evident from the outside as the stringers telegraph through as darker silhouettes as opposed to the translucent white of just the fabric itself.

In general, I found for a very light boat like this attention to detail was more important than any boat I have previously worked on. Also, the original boat was constructed with canvas which was attached with what must have been literally 1,000 tacks and I thought the real measure of success for this rebuild will be how easy it is to recover, the idea being if its easy to recover its more likely to actually get done as opposed to ending up being abandoned, which I don't want to happen.

So I decided that, since the fabric was wide enough to wrap around the hull (with a seam along the center of the top deck) and that's all held in place just with the heat tape as well as being glued to itself with the heat tape, then the next thing to think about was the coaming attachment. Originally there was a small 1/4" quarter round that was nailed in with many small brads and which did not survive removal, so instead I put in its place oak shoe molding (with the bottom beveled to match the deck) and then screwed this to the coaming from the inside with countersunk screws through the coaming. The shoe moulding is a little oversize and looks a little clunky to me but it also needs to be a little heavier than originally designed as its not nailed every 2" but instead is screwed every 6"-8". So I'm hoping that recovering will be relatively easy with all parts reusable and fairly easily removed and refastened.

It is unusual looking with the translucent material and it gives it a very modern look and I love the fact that the plans are from 1932. I'm really looking forward to getting it out on the water with other kayaks to compare.



## Road Trip

By Mike Wick  
Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*  
Newsletter of the Delaware River  
Chapter TSCA

Doug Oeller has dreams of finding and buying the perfect boat. Right now he owns *Comfort*, a cold molded Marshcat, and she is so close to perfect that finding a new boat is a tall order. Recently Doug saw an ad for a homebuilt Cape Henry 22 designed by Dudley Dix and he flew out to Kalamazoo, Michigan, to see her. He discovered that her builder had made too many alterations and the boat wasn't worth tearing apart and putting her back together, so he flew home again to continue his quest.

When we were sailing together on the Chesapeake last spring, we sailed into a cove on Tilghman Island and saw a Cornish Shrimper anchored there. We had a good gam with her owner who was leisurely cruising the Bay and very happy to be there. His boat is a fiberglass clone of an English gaffer fishing boat that had been built in England and shipped abroad, and is just a little bit larger than *Comfort*. We were all quite taken with this 19' cabin sailboat, her cabin wasn't big but it was big enough. She had a small inboard diesel and is a real step up from our open boats.



Doug found a sister ship for sale on a website and he invited Kevin Mac, Phil and me to drive up and see her in Nantucket. To buy a boat without first seeing her would be foolishness and we wouldn't want Doug to rush to a purchase without the benefit of our expert opinion. Nantucket is halfway to the Maine Boatbuilder's Show so we would drive there, too. The whole trip made perfect sense, so we gladly assembled and headed for New England. This was March and it had been a long boatless winter.

Nantucket is an island accessible only by ferry. The trip takes about an hour and a bit from Cape Cod. We arrived in Hyannis on Thursday night and slept in a motel before boarding the ferry on Friday morning. Friday was a cold but sunny and pleasant day and we were well dressed for the weather. On arrival at 11:00, we walked up a hill to find the private garage where the treasure was hidden. Nantucket is kind of like a giant gated community with the ferry as the gate. It is a fine place to visit, even in winter.

We contacted the seller by cell phone, got instructions for where to find the key to his garage and examined the Shrimper for several hours. We stretched out on the bunks and sat in the seats and dreamed of sailing her over the horizon. We peered into the engine compartment and counted through hull fittings. We poked and prodded and generally looked for anything that could be wrong with this boat. And she was a beauty! She had been meticulously maintained and serviced; hard to believe she was 15 years old. The saying is that the perfect boat is 4' longer than your present boat, and she was 4' longer than our boats. You could just see the lust in the inspectors' eyes as we dreamed of sailing her further afield than we dared go in our own beloved boats. The winter caretaker showed us additional boating gear that was in the house all neatly coiled, stacked and labeled. Then we reluctantly put her back together the way we had found her. We rushed down to the ferry and just squeezed in to almost the last seats available at the last minute.



That was Friday night. We drove on as far as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, that night and found rooms just a couple of hours below Portland, Maine. The next day was another mild day and we descended on the Maine Boatbuilder's Show. There it was, acres of eye candy, some of the most beautiful boats we could imagine, and we were happy to dream and look at all the latest collection of new and restored boats. It's true we really don't need much, but it is fun to look, anyway.

We ran into David Cockey, supervisor of the MASCF's all important Saturday sailboat race. By mid afternoon we had seen what we wanted to see and were ready to rush home before the next snowstorm. We considered driving late to make it home Saturday night but at dinner sanity ruled and we stopped near Candlewood Lake for the night. Next day was home.

What about the boat? Doug listened to lots of advice and sorted through lots of expressed opinions, but he kept mum about his decision.

(Follow-Up: On Monday, March 24, Doug advised us that an offer he had made to the seller of the Shrimper was accepted. Congratulations, Doug!)

## Waterlog

By Mike Bill  
Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*  
Newsletter of the Delaware River  
Chapter TSCA

Chapter members attended the Woodworking Show in March (See *MAIB* May) got a chance to see one of my most invaluable tools in action, my Black & Decker Workmate. My ownership of this Workmate goes back to the late 1970s. A good friend of mine had one of the original units, built with cast aluminum structure and birch plywood tops. These originals sell now in used condition for \$300 or more. Mine was a second edition, built with stamped steel legs and combination laminated/MDF plywood top. I think it was a Christmas present from my wife at one of our first married Christmases together.

This Workmate lived on the balcony of our apartment for five or six years, helped build our New York house in 1983, moved to North Carolina in 1989 and then to New Jersey in 1994, not to mention side trips to Vermont and Pennsylvania for other projects. It has been used on every major or minor project of mine for over 35 years, including engine rebuilds, masonry scaffolding, shot-shell reloading table and routing table, not to mention all the planing, shaping and sanding of furniture, jewelry boxes, boat thwarts, stems and knees when there wasn't enough space in my shop to use the workbench.

In the cold, unforgiving light on the show floor, while serving as the workbench for our mast hoop bending jig, it showed its "character." A little too much character. Time for a needed rebuild of the top. At the same time, I also wanted to implement a few upgrades that I knew would improve my future use based on prior experiences:



Use birch ply to match the original, most durable surface.

Increase top thickness from 1" to 1 1/4" to increase clamping surface and reduce the potential for surface markings on softer materials (without adding excessive weight).

Expand the surface area to better accommodate larger, flatter surfaces such as plates, trophy plaques and similar flat odd shaped projects (but not so much as to eliminate some of its adaptability).

Retain the V groove in the clamping faces for use on dowels and similar round projects.

Implement a finish that is more resistant to water and other liquids than the original lacquer.

Build in some sort of storage for the "dogs" used to clamp odd pieces without using the existing holes and always having them in the way (and again without adding excessive weight).



From the pictures you can see the original design and condition and the net result of the implemented changes.

I laminated  $\frac{3}{4}$ " and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " plywood, with pre chamfered edges, to get the top thickness and V groove.

I also added  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " oak stringers under each top, with the purpose of stiffening the top, and eliminated the inevitable warping or bending of the top. These conveniently now serve as holsters for the clamping dogs.



The surface was expanded by a couple of inches in both length and width.

Clearance notches were put in the stationary jaw to give plenty of clearance for the new replacement crank.

For the finish, I chose Smiths CPES Cold Formula epoxy. Without sounding like a commercial, this product should be on the resource list of every boat builder. This product is formulated with a carrier solvent. It is not used to glue parts together, but rather as a penetrating finish that strengthens the molecular structure of wood cellulose, while at the same time restricting or eliminating water penetration.



It is also used to neutralize the acidity in woods such as white and red oak and makes an ideal primer prior to their use in further lamination or application of other epoxy resins. I use this on any raw wood before any lamination or epoxy/fiberglass applications to provide much deeper penetration and sealing of the wood substrate. I always use it when epoxy and oak need to coexist.

I prepped the tops and bored the holes using a 20mm Forstner bit (this size is exactly correct for this use, most stock workbenches use  $\frac{3}{4}$ " holes, the B&D and like aftermarket dogs won't fit standard workbenches). I also finished the tops with CPES after I drilled all the holes so that I got similar sealing within the holes. Lastly, I steel woolled the tops and applied butcher's wax to the tops and holes minimize sticking of foreign glues and finishes.

I'm pretty sure that this will last me another 35 years. To make sure, I also will make some thin plywood sacrificial tops

that will match the dimension of the top so that if I'm tempted to put ugly stuff on the top, it will have a first line of defense from now on. This invaluable tool is ready for its next adventure!



## The Snuggery

By Frank Stauss  
Reprinted from The Mainsheet  
Newsletter of the Delaware River  
Chapter TSCA

I am in the process of building a 14' sailboat called the Deer Isle Koster. Those of you who have built boats know that life sometimes gets in the way of the build. This usually means that the build sits idle before things again get moving again. This happened to me, but in January things got back to normal and the process started once again.

I am at the point now where I must paint the interior of the boat before I can attach the deck. Painting is an exacting chore which I dislike. It is very easy to want to do something else rather than to tackle this important part of the build. I have found that it takes persistence to get through this part of the process. Lots and lots of persistence.

Former President Calvin Coolidge once spoke on the topic of persistence. He stated, "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not, nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not, unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not, the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, Press On, has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race." I wonder if old silent Cal ever had to paint a boat that he was building.

Oh, by the way, I looked up the definition of persistence. The dictionary says persistence is to continue firmly or obstinately. I have no problem being obstinate.

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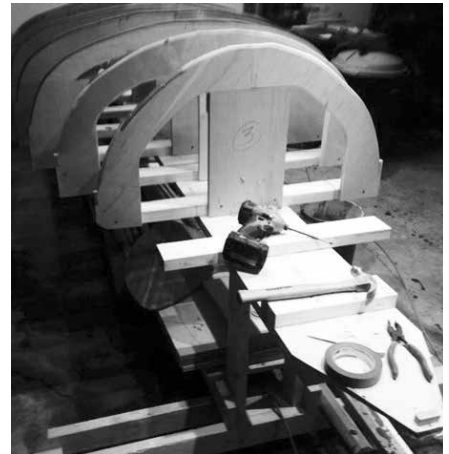
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The furry faced one on the right in *Chelsea* is Alaska Brook. You may remember him from the picture I once sent of the boat he built that looked like an igloo. He lives in southern Alaska so that makes sense. The waving girl is his wife Wendy and the sitting girl is Dorsey, who lives here. Somehow they know each other from another life and when in Florida where would they go for a visit, Disneyland or our Tiki Hut? I guess the answer is obvious. Like most of our visitors, Brook and Wendy have some fantastic stories. The town they live in has no roads in or out, ferry or air only, and heat from hot springs. They make it sound like a good place to live.

# From the Tiki Hut

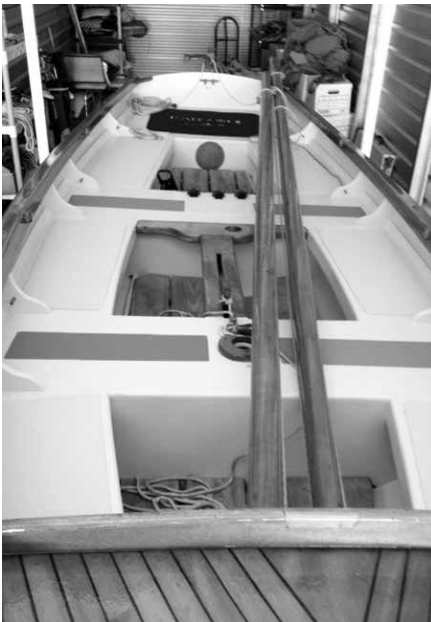
By Dave Lucas



Kevin Lott up in Georgia has finished his Cortez melonseed hull and is taking the mold apart. You can see why we love making these boats, they are so much fun to sand and look at and rub our hands over, and since they're wood we can keep sanding them to our hearts content. Kevin stopped by here last year to see one of these boats in person before he started on his and decided that they may very well be the best little boats in the world.



Dean is a guy who likes building boats more than he likes getting wet using them. His last one was a Goat Island Skiff that he pretty much gave away. After he sold it I got calls from a lot of you who wanted it. I'll let you know about this one.



If you came to Sarasota or Cedar Key you might have seen this beautiful Penobscot 17 that Doug has done a total redo on. We should make him take us all out for a sail to see how it goes, maybe get its bottom scratched.



Gary Cull of *Snail Mail* fame pulled up in the yard last month with the boat itself. This cute little tugboat is battery powered with a real electric motor instead of the usual trolling motor types. It has a big prop and everything. This boat has been all the way to Sail Oklahoma and back. Gary's ready to move on to another build and is willing to sell this one really cheap. How cheap is cheap I don't know but he said it wouldn't be much more than the cost of the trailer alone.



If we sand long enough they'll look like some of these. How can we not want to keep on going to bring out this look. The guys threatened that they were going to drag this bright one out into the woods if I didn't stop sanding and get it out of the shop. Dr Jose did a yellow and red one and was a fanatic about getting every bump and hard spot out. He succeeded. I remember telling him lots of times that it was good enough and he'd just say, "it's not perfect yet."





*Miss Kate* is another one we can see ourselves in, Howard fell under the spell.



My *Laylah's* finish isn't up to the these other boats, she's meant to be rode hard and put away wet. I'm including this shot to show you how they're suppose to be sailed. Laying down with a beer in my hand and a designated driver at the helm. This little green boat has been run up on rocks everywhere from South Florida to the Chesapeake Bay. The only boat we've built with a stronger hull is the foam boat. I wanted that hull to be indestructible so I went totally nuts with the glass schedule.



Jim has come to that awful moment in motorboat building when he realized that he was finished and had to buy the motor and controls. That's always the biggest clump of money to come up with at one time and even though knowing it's coming it's still hard shelling out thousands of dollars.

Texas Buddy made this one but I think he forgot the other outrigger. Not unusual for a Texan, they think they can do anything with less. Speaking of Texas, I just read about the Texas 200 race, all I ever got from the stories is that it's hot, really hot and humid and windy and the wind is like standing in front of a clothes dryer outlet. It may still be fun since it's a fast race in shallow water. And we know that Chuck the Duck wouldn't fib to us.



Howard is tired of building boats so now he's looking at airplanes. We went over to Sun 'n Fun with Phil to see some kit planes and there were a lot of them. I don't think it'll be these two, probably an RV-8. Yes, he's serious and he's a pilot so I wouldn't put it past him.

The Small Craft meet was held at the Sarasota Sailing Squadron in mid April and Saturday was blown away by strong winds, gusts to 28mph were recorded. The only boats going out that day were the six year old kids in the little Optis and there were a bunch of them out. These little boats seem to be able to go out in any conditions, great training for future sailing. I only took a couple of pictures but there are a lot more on these two sites: <http://ftp.ij.net/wctss/wctss/photos116.html> <http://planingaround.blogspot.com/>

This one is a skipjack with a telephone pole mast. Standing there looking at it is scary, don't know why it doesn't turn over.



I was pleasantly surprised to see this one, it's the big, blown up melonseed that Howard built here at the shop a long time ago all prettied up and shiny. Its new owner will have a ball being the best looking boat on the water.



Doug was out Sunday after the wind had gone down some and with Simon's help ripped it up in his restored Penobscot 17.

Crazy Steve's finished his 14' catboat and needed to try it out. It's not a melonseed hull but has the same stock Beetle Cat sail as ours. We took his boat and my *Laylah* out on the Manatee River on a perfect sailing day to see how they compare.





What's missing from these pictures? He doesn't have a drink in his hand, that's 'cause the dumb ass refuses to put cup holders in his deck, which gives this boat an overall grade of F. If you ain't got a cup holder you ain't got shit.



The all white finish looks really good after all. He made most of his hardware from ropes saturated in epoxy and shaped to fit his requirement. The hull is a foot and a half shorter, a foot wider and a lot higher than *Laylah* and really handles the waves. I was getting wet from the spray and wakes and he got none. We were just about the same speed overall, I may have been a tiny bit faster due to the longer hull. With a stronger wind and bigger waves to surf he can probably take me. Both of our sails are brand new and still need to have some of the creases pulled out.

He even let me try it out for a little while. A dry, comfortable boat.



When I saw the one with me standing up I first thought that I was standing in shallow water next to the boat then realized that I'm in the boat in deep water. I was holding up an empty beer can asking if he had any more. You know, these really are little boats but they're safe on the water.



We pulled up one the beach at DeSoto Point to make some adjustments to the rigging.



Here's what it looks like when four Great Danes take over your boat. *Cessna* likes to go by this bunch and talk to them, good thing they don't like to get in the water or we'd have a boat full of wet dog.

The Everglades Challenge boat's bottom is finished, the black is a very thick epoxy/graphite coating that's sanded down to expose the graphite, suppose to be tough and slick.



My neighbor Ernie was lost in the woods and came across these two floats that Trimaran Frank left here. So naturally he had to see if he could make a fast trolling motor powered boat. Must be something in the air here that makes normally rational guys go boat crazy. We have "real" boats all over the place and never use them, what fun is that? Dr E says that if I tried to get on it with my fat ass it would sink. I thought I had a skinny ass. The thing floats a lot higher with Donna driving it.



Another friend, Austin, is packing it in and moving back to Australia, or maybe it's New Zealand, and brought a lot of his boat stuff out here for us. It's like Christmas when we see him drive up and ask for help unloading. Hand tools are so so but when he pulled out the 5' long clamps we jumped right on it.

I don't say much about Sandy because he's the quiet one who likes to hang out in his shop and build little canoes. And if you interrupt him he'll start talking and not stop till you run away. That may be his plot to keep visitors away. His spot is out back under the trees where he can sit and contemplate the world. I caught him by surprise hard at work on a rail, how do I get his job?





## Session II - April 5

Today we had Session II on the Robertson project and things are starting to look good. Muffins replaced the donuts and some new faces showed up to join the fun. Workers today included John Fiske, Tom Bickford, Tom Heys, John Fitzgerald, Ed Moses, Bob Benedict and Bill Clements.

When we left the canoe on March 22 the ends had been partially repaired and the glue was drying. Today we finished the job, scarfing one inwale at each end and making the joints with the stems. At the end of the session we left the canoe once again with glue drying.



Glue is drying, temporary seats and thwart are in place.

In addition to the work on the ends, we removed the center thwart and the two seats. The surprise here was finding that Mr Robertson had stamped the serial number on the underside of all these parts. The mounting holes were all damaged and we drilled them out and inserted a short length of oak dowel in each hole, to be trimmed later and redrilled for new bolts. Instead of the original steel mounting bolts we will use bronze carriage bolts that will be easier for the next restorers to take apart, 80 or 90 years down the road.

## The Robertson Project

By Steve Lapey,  
Norumbega Chapter WCHA

A close inspection of the planking revealed, as usual, a little more than we had expected to need replacement. Bill Clements led the way with a utility knife and some tack pullers and in short order most of the damaged red cedar planking was on the scrap pile.



Bill Clements and Ed Moses doing the demo work on the old Robertson.

New planking was milled from some vertical grain red cedar boards. We resawed it on the table saw and then ran it through the

planer to its final dimension. We have almost 40' of new planking which should be enough.



Tom Heys catching the planking as it comes out of the planer.

The next shop session for the Robertson will be on Saturday, April 26. We should be able to get the hull outside and give the interior a good scrubbing to get it ready for sanding and revarnishing. It is nice enough that we will not have to completely strip to old finish. Also, on the 26th we will be able to make the necessary bending jigs for the new outside stems and the new decks. Ed Moses has donated a nice piece of white oak for the stems and he is going to mill out some mahogany blanks for the new decks. This will be an opportunity to learn some of the basics of wood bending for any Norumbega members who are contemplating a restoration but are not familiar with the tricks of the trade. Come watch and learn here at the canoe shop.



Out come the broken ribs.

April 26 was a rainy Saturday so I decided to drive over to Steve Lapey's canoe shop in nearby (12 miles) Groveland to see what was happening at Session #3 of the Robertson Canoe Restoration Project. Steve had a "full house" in his 12'x24' purpose built shop (masquerading as a garden shop due to local zoning restrictions). There were eight guys gathered alongside the Robertson as removal of a couple of cracked ribs was in process, Steve leading the action in an instructional mode. In due course the two cracked ribs were extracted to the satisfaction of the assembled multitude.

Eight guys are a multitude in the tight confines of Steve's shop, as you can see in

## Here at the Canoe Shop

By Bob Hicks



Steve steps outside to take a call.

the photos. With the canoe taking up about 16'x3' down the center and with benches along both long walls taking up another 3' together, 6' of the 12' width are filled, leaving about 3' of standing room alongside the canoe on each side. For one guy at work (Steve) this is plenty, for eight, a bit crowded. But they were all happily going at the project.

The shop is a marvel of detailed organization, the power tools lined up along one wall can be rolled out individually (even out of doors for even more room) to do their duty. The walls are covered completely with all the small stuff needed to do canoe building and restoration as you can see in one of the photos.



The project is also an instructional session.



The walls also serve as storage space.

And overhead slung in cradles which can be lowered with rope falls from the side are two of Steve's canoes, apparently the best ones as others reside in an adjacent open ended shed.

In all, a monument to one man's desire to indulge in his favorite hobby and one he shares with fellow enthusiasts on these annual projects to benefit the WCHA. As Steve invites at the end of his report, "Come watch and learn here at the canoe shop." You can reach Steve (he is the Norumbega Chapter Head) at (978) 374-1104, [stevelaye@comcast.net](mailto:stevelaye@comcast.net).

**March 28**

I spent last night constructing the deck framing for the forward hatch. This hatch will give me access to the bow area under the deck. Otherwise I would have to crawl into that small, cramped area. Can you say "claustrophobia?"



## The Melonseed Project (continued)

By Richard Honan

**March 29**

Busy day yesterday as we fastened down the deck. The 1/4" thick Okoume plywood had been pre cut to size, the deck frame locations had been scribed and the open areas had been previously primed and painted. The underside of the deck was scribed or marked out so that paint would not be applied to where the deck would come in contact with the deck frames. This was done to ensure a wood-to-wood contact for better epoxy adhesion.



We rolled a thin coat of Raka epoxy on both the deck frames and the underside of the deck. The newspaper lying on the inside of the hull was to catch any excess drips of epoxy.



In addition, a small bead of thickened epoxy was applied to the deck frames.



The pre cut deck was then positioned in place, clamped and fastened to the deck frames with #8 x 1" stainless steel screws.





**April 5**  
We're in the final stages of my construction project, building a 16' Melonseed sailing skiff. Yesterday's job entailed the fiberglassing of the entire deck. A messy job covering the deck with a combination of epoxy resin and fiberglass cloth. This will not only strengthen the deck, but will add an important non skid surface. Helping me yesterday was my brother Steve and my grandson Christopher.

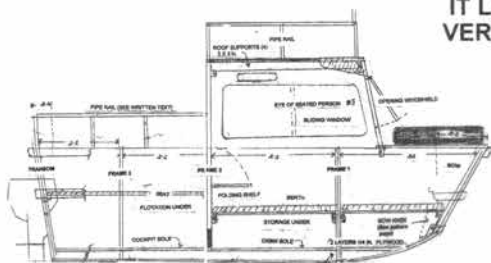
With the deck attached and fiberglassed, only a few things remain to be done by June 15th's christening and launching. Mark the date down in your calendar, June 15, 2014, details to follow.

After the epoxy hardened, brother Steve, Joe and myself sanded down the high spots and refilled any low spots in the holes. Next up will be an application of either 6oz or 10oz fiberglass cloth to the entire deck.

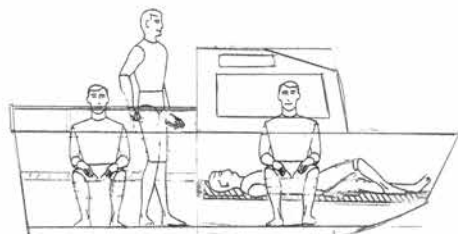


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ERGONOMICS AND HOW YOU FIT IN SEA ROVER



The article in the December 2013 issue by Joseph Ress about the Navy 26' motor whaleboat recalled particularly indelible memories for me. In the spring and summer of 1958 I was a 20-year-old deckhand (Seaman Ordinary) on the *USS Hydrographer*, a ship commissioned by the then Coast & Geodetic Survey as a survey vessel conducting bathymetric surveys of the Georges Banks. We made ten day survey voyages from our East Boston harborage with four to five day shore periods following each trip. We carried two motor whaleboats rigged to davits on our mid ships boat deck which we used for the shoal water bathymetry inaccessible to the deeper draught ship.

The *Hydrographer* won three battle stars for surveys conducted during World War II in both Atlantic and Pacific. Her dimensions were 164'11" length overall by 31'6" beam by 11'6" draught. It was aboard her I learned to play guitar after the crew offered to throw me and my accordion overboard after our first trip offshore.

During one of our earlier trips, four of us were detailed to take one of the whaleboats over the shallower areas of the banks along a survey grid roughly established from the *Hydrographer* before we launched. As I was one of several helmsmen on the larger ship detailed to steer transects during the longer deepwater survey runs, I was sent along to relieve the cox who normally steered the whaleboat. We took a lunch the cook packed and water and, after launching, motored per-

## More on Motor Whaleboats

By Allan Horton

haps a quarter mile from the ship to begin our first day's work.

The morning proceeded without event and at noon we anchored on the banks for lunch, both to hold position and allow whoever was on the helm to relax also. The sea was quite calm with very slight wave action. As we finished lunch, however, we noticed a fog bank on the horizon but thought little of it, big mistake.

Resuming work after lunch, we continued to run our survey transects according to the compass bearings as prearranged by engineer/officers on the *Hydrographer* until quite suddenly, by mid afternoon, we were totally socked in. While we had been running our transects, the ship had been steaming along on her deep sea bathymetry on her normal ten mile long transect courses and was well below our horizon some miles distant.

The fog was the thickest, dampest, most opaque fog most of us had ever seen. We immediately anchored and, using our marine radio, called the mother ship to report our situation. As it turned out, within the hour, and long before she could steam within sight, the *Hydrographer* also was fogged in. Retracing

one of her transects, she motored to within one mile (approximately) of us, anchored and began her fog signals with bell and foghorn.

Although we could talk by radio with the ship, we could not take a bearing on her nor could her officers sufficiently define our position to guide us "home." No matter how we tried, we could not reliably determine the ship's bearing. One seaman would say "over there" and immediately another would say "no, man, she's over here." Both the blare of the ship's foghorn and the chime of her bell seemed to echo or ricochet from every quarter at once.

So we sat and eventually huddled all night beneath the hooped canvas canopy during one of the coldest, dampest, clammiest evenings any of us (I'm sure) ever had endured, without food but fortunately with plenty of water (but no coffee). We also had nothing to keep us warm because we had dressed only for the day's work in jeans and blue chambray work shirts.

The fog never eased and at times was so dense we could not see from the whaleboat's bow the rotating lookout stationed in the stern when he lit a cigarette. Shortly after dawn the fog cleared and there, not one mile distant, sat the *Hydrographer*! Never was she so pretty a sight, nor was the hot coffee and breakfast the cook had ready for us after we boarded ever so welcome.

Of all the memories I collected aboard the *Hydrographer*, my night at sea in the fog aboard a 26' whaleboat remains indelible.



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## From the Shop Floor

Our apprentices often find themselves immersed in history as well as boat building. For our second year apprentices, two rich sailing histories are unfolding and shaping the construction of their yearlong projects: the Lawley Tender and the Columbia dinghy.

Currently under construction at The Apprenticeshop, the Lawley Tender was designed by George Lawley at the turn of the 20th century. An immigrant to Massachusetts from England, Lawley brought his ship-building talent with him and started his own business that would thrive for multiple generations. His talent was widely recognized by the elite sailing community and he was recruited to contribute to the design and construction of America's Cup defenders such as *Puritan* and *Mayflower*. At just over 12' long, the Lawley Tender was designed to accompany one of Lawley's larger yachts but has since earned its own distinction as a striking and seaworthy vessel.

It's fitting that a Lawley Tender is now being built alongside a Columbia Dinghy at The Apprenticeshop. The Columbia Dinghy is a renowned design by Nathaniel Herreshoff, one of the most famous designers of America's Cup defenders. Herreshoff's Columbia Dinghy, sometimes known as the Columbia Lifeboat, is just shy of 12' and can be rigged as a sailing dinghy or a rowing boat. The boat has been reimaged by other designers over the years, including Maine's own Joel White who created a carvel planked version called a Catspaw.

Both of these boats are lapstrake constructions. As with every traditional build we undertake at The Apprenticeshop, both boats were also lofted by hand before construction began earlier this year. Our apprentices have built the molds and will be planking the boats this spring. We'll keep you updated about their progress and launch dates as these new boats emerge from their rich histories at the hands of our apprentices.



## So, You Think You Want To be a Boat Builder?

By Damian McLaughlin Jr

So you think that you want to be a boat builder? Well, in my opinion, boat building is a wonderful profession but a terrible business. It is true that I have been able to get by financially, sort of, and in the end have ended up with a little more equity than if I had just worked for someone else. However, the dollars per hour were never very good. Would I do it all again? YES, but with a few changes. I guess the reason comes down to "The Project." The challenge to transform thoughts and concepts and dreams into something real, The Project, has been most rewarding.

Many kids, mostly boys, have enjoyed building model boats and airplanes. Most grow out of it, others become engineers and some become builders. Education is based on the need to know this or that. It is a tangled web of many paths that often interact.

"The Project." I arrived on Cape Cod in the spring of 1969 and was lucky enough to land a job at a little cabinet shop. I have always liked to work diligently. The owner of the shop was very happy to explain things and was a great teacher, but after a few months he had to admit that I was like a sponge soaking up any and all information that was available. We did learn some things together.

Cape Cod is, of course, surrounded by water and there are many little harbors and bays. I soon realized that I needed a boat. Just how many boats I would think that I needed over the years has yet to manifest itself. In any case, I announced one Monday morn-

ing that I had to build a boat. As luck would have it we had a copy of Howard Chapelles boat building book. The book had some plans and, after some thought, we selected a typical flat bottomed skiff. Then some problems surfaced. The design was a 12' design but the lumberyard could only provide 10' plywood on short notice, and since we figured that the ply would be stronger we used 5/8" thickness rather than the 3/4" pine specified. We modified the shape to fit the materials just as if we knew what we were doing. Three evening sessions later we had a boat, sort of. We launched it without paint to get a waterline and by the weekend the first row took place.

Well, the McLaughlin Skiff was born. She floated and got me out on the water and the education and the fun, in hindsight, was worth it. But she was really pretty bad. After a summer of adventures, like trying to row through Woods Hole channel against the current, I finally took her back to the shop and leaned her up against the back wall, figuring that was the best place to end her days. But one day a friend showed up questioning my decision. He wanted a skiff.

"Well, if you want her she is yours," I said, "but she doesn't come back here." But a couple of years later while driving down my driveway I noticed a strange pile of brush partly hidden by a white pine tree. There she was, come back to haunt me. After 45 years she, or what is left of her, is still sitting in the woods and I have to smile when remembering where I was then and where I have come to now.

The moral of the story is: If you think that you want to build a boat, by all means go ahead, but you might want to ask some questions and do some research before you just jump in.

*(Editor Comments: Damian McLaughlin soon went into business for himself and has been building boats since 1970 in Falmouth, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod.)*



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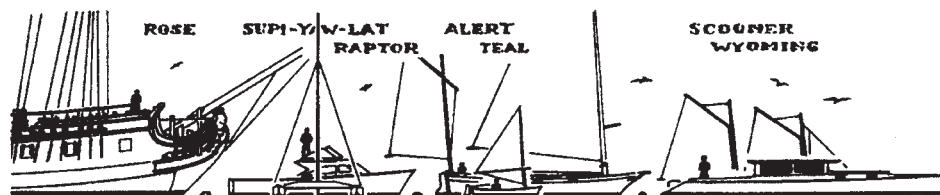
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### Model 7 "Long House Sedan Cruiser"

After Model 6 in the last issue, here is an obvious one on that same hull. Continuing this mild mannered visual style, this longer house trades Model 6's seeming longer and lower style for, in many ways, better ergonomics. Before getting into her, as mentioned in earlier parts of this series, you could go quite far in adding smaller and larger functional and aesthetic details to dress her up further. Here we'll just look at the functional and ergonomic basics.

Coming aboard again, there is the same 4.25'x6.5' aft cockpit with ample room for two folding chairs in addition to the two built in seats flanking the outboard hood. Going forward, however, the wheelhouse now measures just under 10' in length on the floor, nearer 12' to the bottom of windshield's center panel. That 2' extra length offers significant changes in the floor plan and daily utility of this most used part of her.

To port there is now a rather inviting raised 1+1 dinette to eat, chat, point virtuous fingers from at irresponsible high carbon go fast boats ruining the globe. To starboard, on similar footprint, the head is now more oblong than square to match the dinette and a decent width passage fore and aft. It is flush with the helm's seatback for least bulk looking aft, while its length along the modest hanging locker does unfortunately block most of the view from the dinette to starboard. Trade-offs.

As another consequence, instead of Model 6's permanent galley block, here we are back to the folding and stowing geometries familiar from the glass house types. Assuming a two some crew, you could have a nice division of labor between the stove forward and the table aft preparing the food, not to mention back and forth opining on poorly cut veggies or not stirring the pot enough. All very civilized, of course, since you'll have to look each other in the eyes to eat.

Forward we're looking at two 6'8" full width bunks, just enough headroom under a smooth ceiling to sit up, slouch, read and doze. Decent under bunk stowage, perhaps a minimal swivel table between, or a congenial filler piece to complete the den.

However, going forward to deal with ground tackle, you'd need to flip up at least one of the bunk surfaces and its mattress, perhaps made in two half lengths, to take advantage of the 4'6" headroom passage following the box keel forward before you get to open the bow hatch to stand up chest deep. A higher step left and right offers whatever extra height you'd rather want above the deck level for best pull on anchor rodes. When standing in the forward end of the box keel ahead of the mattresses, even serious rain would not soak them, assuming protection from a short length of shower curtain. There'd be lots of uses for either multiple shelves or lines bins in those triangular spaces left and right. Yes, you could take away cuddy volume from the

## Phil Bolger & Friends On Design

### More Preliminary Studies for Champlain 28

28'x8'2"x1'8"x25hp

### Part 5 of More Than 5!

forward end above the bunks to still put in the same two person bow cockpit featured on Model 6. Some would rather keep the cuddy as is.

As already touched on, the somewhat odd thing about Model 7 is the loss of three out of five windows of her starboard side. That porthole to cast private light into the head may well need replacing with one full size silhouette of the other windows. With the door open, there'd be some view to starboard from the dinette, during the Second Course you'd just ignore the WC, thus also interrupting that larger blank surface of the house. Or you'd add a standard make overhead hatch for better light, keep or discard the porthole and then use this vertical surface to brag about your travels so far.

### Rear Engine Rear Wheel Drive

Somewhat unexpectedly, examining the option to fit a 25-30hp Diesel into her stern proved to be a plausible one without affecting the cockpit. In fact, improbably so, the engine is nestled under a stern sofa taking up less people room than even the most modest of outboards. As to be expected, engine-space ventilation matters. And we may, in fact, find that raising the cockpit sole by a couple of inches and moving the forward vertical face of the bench forward by a few might loosen things up for happiest installation and maintenance conditions. But as it stands, it seems already a plausible setup with many cars' engines shoe horned in tighter than this.

Here we are again using that three cylinder Volvo D1-30, but now we put that power of around 25hp into the water via a Sillette Sonic Mk II Saildrive. These come with a forward or rear input option, here allowing putting the engine behind it, connected through a short length of two constant velocity joints between soft mounted Diesel and the bolted down drive. Shown is a 15" propeller. Optional is the lower drive leg to be built of bronze for much longer expected life together next to copper paint and soaking in salt water.

What is unavailable for that leg is to pivot vertically for steering like an outboard's. And this brings up the question of mounting a rudder abaft the prop when the engine and gearbox would seem to block that geometry. But there are two plausible options:

1) Mount the engine somewhat off center to clear a vertical rudder stock and then

lean the Saildrive unit to both put the prop on centerline to blow that rudder blade and still put the input shaft in line with the gearbox. Quite doable, not ruinous to the Saildrive's lubrication system and a fine conversation piece during every haulout.

2) Flank the Saildrive leg with twin *Resolution* style rudders, with their pivot point in the plane of the prop, which thus produces unobstructed propwash between those rudders, to only be very powerfully redirected by the rudders when the wheel is turned. Not cheap due to twin rudders to be built and installed, more vulnerable without protection from a skeg and requiring a no feedback steering system, likely a small hydraulic, to control them in a straight line running forward and then authoritatively shove these overbalanced blades left and right for a most impressive sideways thrust of the prop's power. And that without mentioning going into reverse.

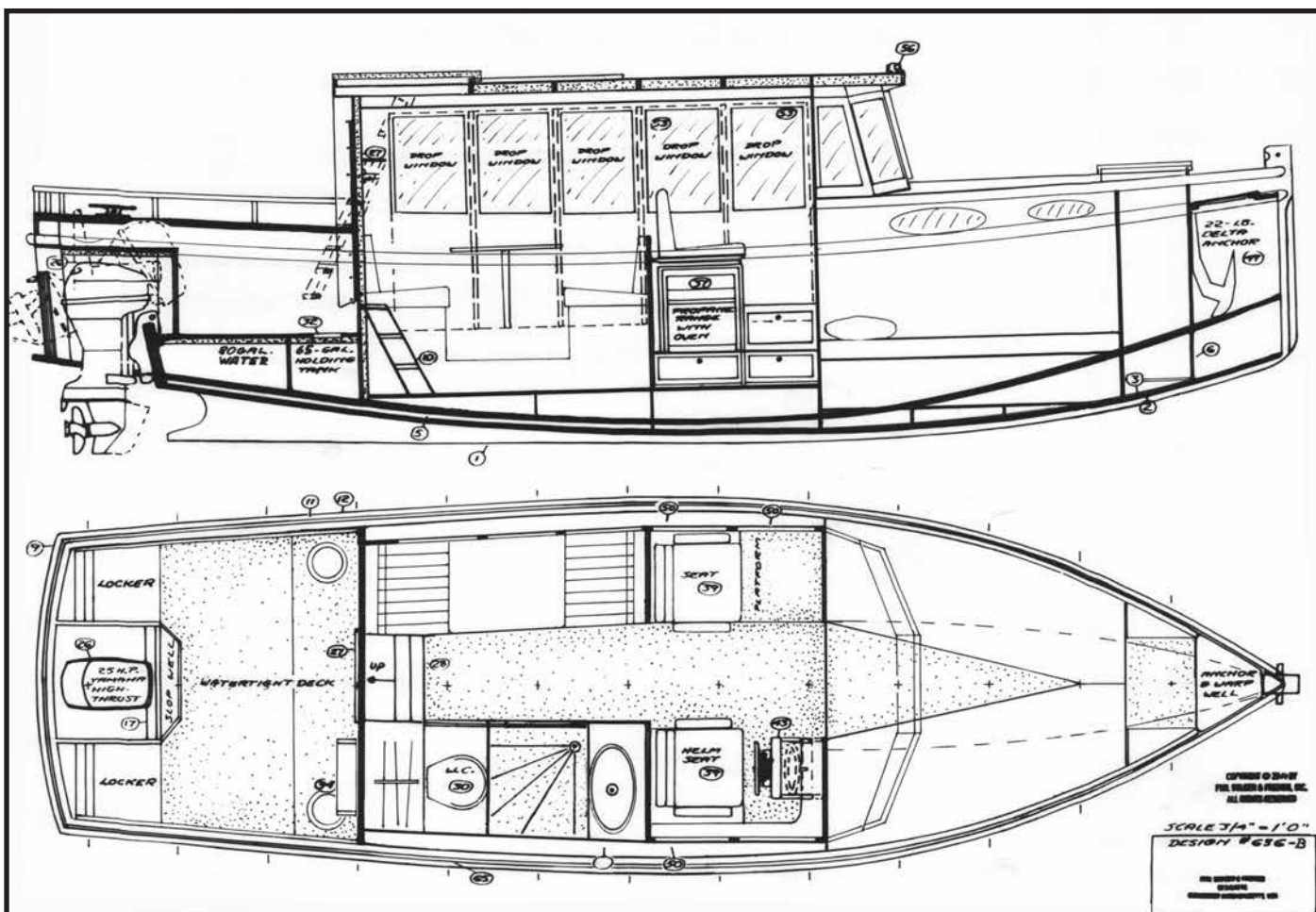
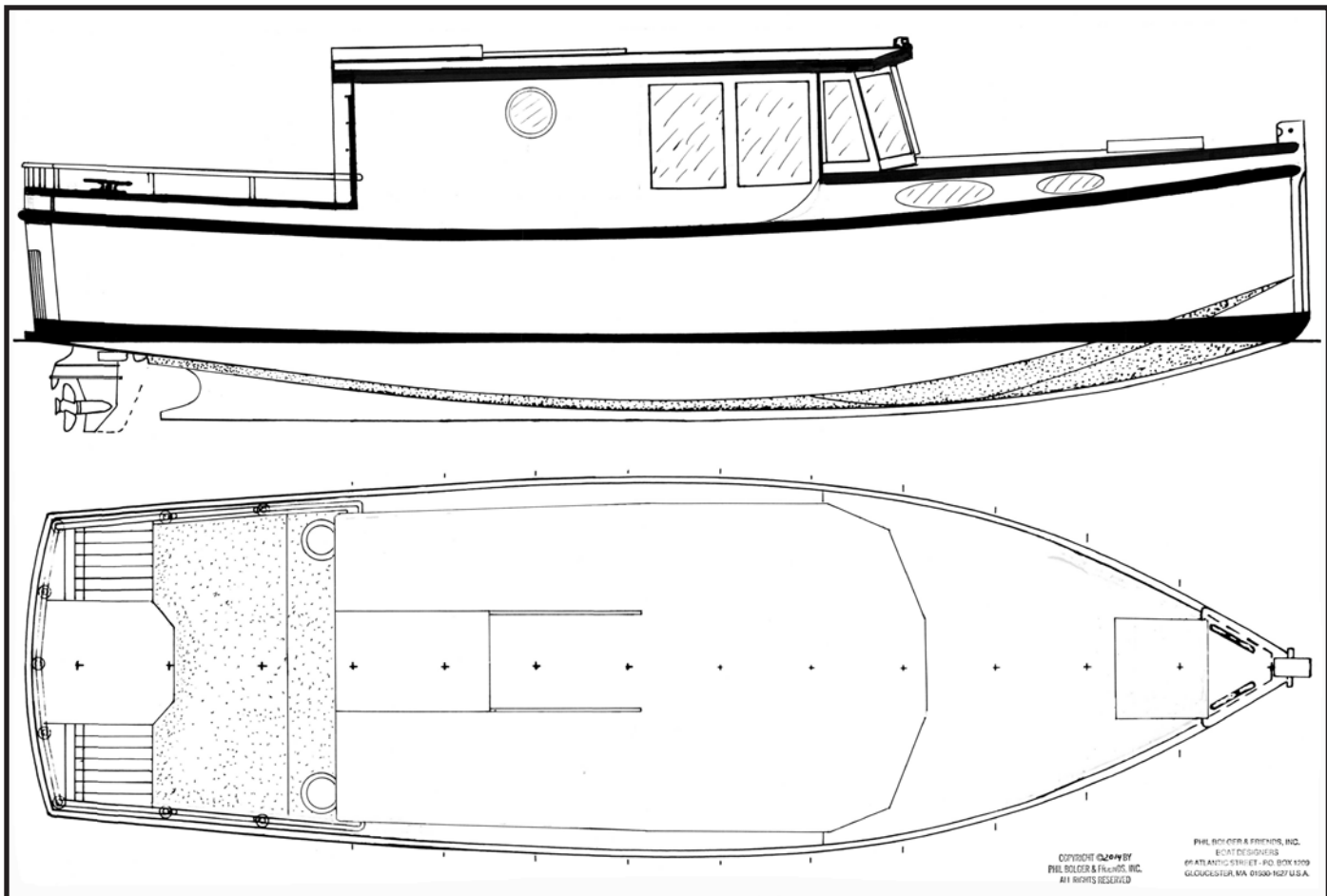
I developed this geometry for Phil's 48' *Resolution* to give her better control yet, built it and then demonstrated it by running her in reverse (!) at about 1000rpm through a circuitous tidal creek, to then turn her 180° in a modest basin at the far end, never touching the throttle, to then retrace that creek the other way, still in reverse to complete the exercise. Key for this remarkable capability was that *Resolution's* hull ended with a near-vertical hull shape, against which I shoved the leading edge of the given rudder blade to block the prop flow in reverse. This forced both sides of the prop thrust out the other side for the directional control in reverse that typically no single screw boat has.

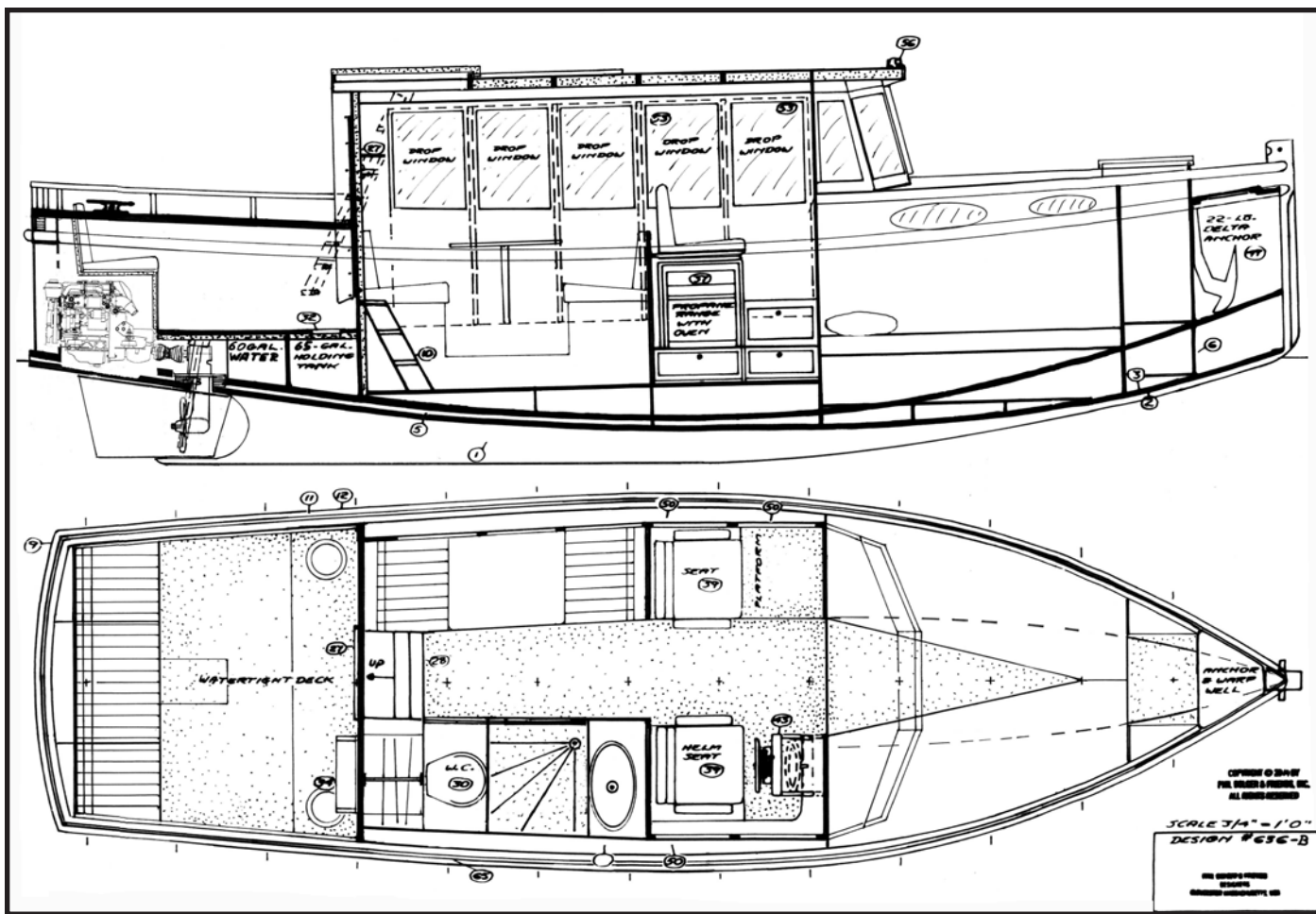
Thus she gained the most rudder authority short of transverse thrusters in both forward and in reverse. Since then, we'd leave a dock with a bowline loosely slung around a dock cleat, rudders hard over the opposite from the dock, put the engine in reverse to pull her stern out sideways until clear of boat behind her, straightened the rudders, to then let go of the bow line to see it whizz around the cleat (better be no knots!!) before one of us hauled in the line, while the other put her into forward with the rudders hard over again to move her bow further away from other craft and then out into the channel. "You had to have been there!"

This geometry requires more visual information via a future article. For this setup here on this plywood hull with a straight run aft, I could use the hyper effective bottom sweeper angled rudder shaft Phil cultivated decades ago on his AS type sailing cruiser sharpies. However, unlike in the case of *Resolution*, here I did not go all the way to have the rudders' leading edges match up with the skeg when hard over for superb reversing rudder effectiveness. Don't ask me why.

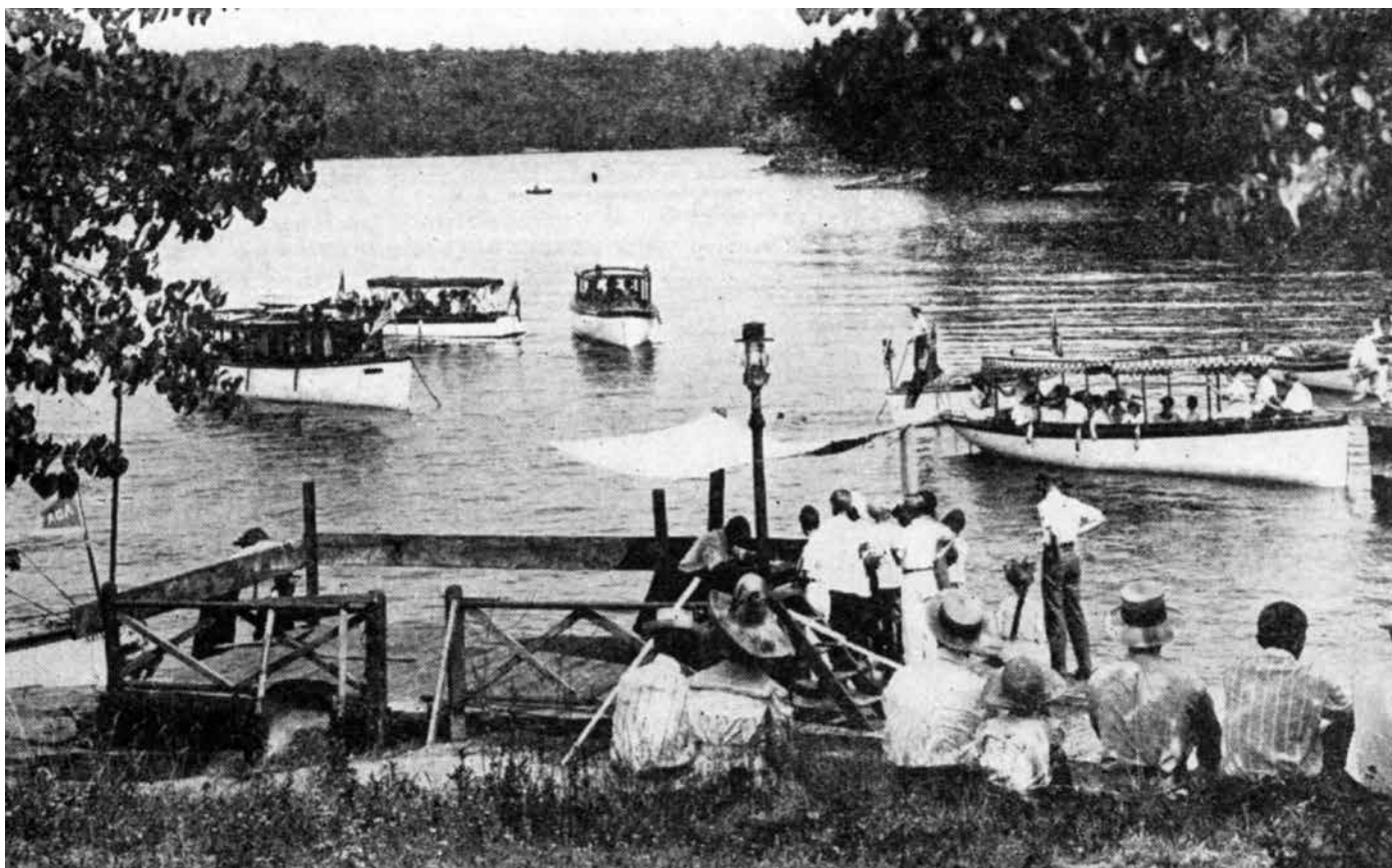
More to come on *Resolution* style rudders, and "Merry Mother of Pearl!", another layout or two on this particular hull.







*Back in the days...*





I often wonder how it is (aside from tiger moms and mandatory violin lessons) an individual takes up a particular musical instrument. Sometimes the third grade music teacher just needed to fill out the clarinet section. Other times it's a chance encounter, as with my friend's son. When this eighth grader watched the high stepping marching band during football halftime it was the trombones which caught his eye, those brass slides shooting in and out, reaching for the sky, dipping to the ground, swaying side to side. He was sold. Now, after several months, the fellow already plays recognizable tunes. But why does someone take up the harp?

Of all the instruments the harp has to be the highest maintenance. The care and feeding of the harp starts with the car you drive. Only one particular station wagon can accommodate a harp. Otherwise you have to join the soccer moms with a minivan. Then you need a system to get the harp out of the car or van and onto your next vehicle, a freight dolly. Of course a dolly means no steps so you'd best have scouted out all the ramps needed to gain the building entrance and then the freight elevator. Yep, you gotta know your freight elevators and hopefully you didn't have to park too far away. (Personally I think harpists deserve handicapped parking stickers.) After an hour (or perhaps a half hour if this is a repeat performance) you work your way onto stage and into place. While you mop your brow the piccolo player shows up, sits down, opens a small case, puts everything together and is good to go. I won't even get into what it takes to tune a harp.

I learned all this from a harpist who was an avid sea kayaker. Unfortunately she



## Paddling a Harp

and her husband lived some distance from their favorite waters, Puget Sound. So, while he worked on a private pilot's license she worked on a way to get their kayaks to those waters. What evolved were folding bicycles and folding kayaks. The plan was to fly to Washington, assemble bikes (and I presume folding trailers) pedal to water's edge and assemble kayaks. I never learned what was to happen to bikes and trailers as the kayaks left the shore. The couple already owned several conventional kayaks and bicycles, folding kayaks and bicycles were a whole new area for research. And my opinion was solicited.

My opinion on folding models of anything is they tend to cost more, often don't hold up or perform as well and involve the hassle of assembly and disassembly. These downsides are justified only if you must have a compact package for transport or storage.

A simpler solution, I suggested to the harpist, would be to leave a couple of their hard-shell kayaks at a marina on Puget Sound. The marina would also provide a place to clean up and change clothes as well as provide lockers for gear.

The harpist couldn't hide her disappointment. She'd wanted my opinion on tactics, the particular folding kayak or bicycle to purchase, not my opinion on strategy. The solution offered was much too simple. I began to understand why this kayaker played the harp.

After that I began to look at boats the way dogs and their owners can be regarded, as reflections of one another. Now when I wander the piers I don't just assess boats by their appeal to me, what I like or don't like, how well the boat would suit my purposes. After all, it's not always about me even by myself. No, I study boats as a window on their owners. (It's only an informal window, nothing like a MeyersBriggs or MMPI.)

Specifically I try to guess what musical instrument would the skipper of a particular boat play. So if a fellow should wander by, study your boat as you prepare to get underway and ask, "Did you ever play a musical instrument?" Well, you know where I'm coming from. And if the boat has eased out of its slip beyond conversation distance, if I note a Seagull outboard for the dinghy, hear the throb of an Atomic-4 and catch the whiff of kerosene from a Primus stove I'll be betting that skipper played the bagpipes, or should have.

(By the way, the harpist and her husband eventually found the simplest solution of all. They moved back to Puget Sound.)

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Roderick Stephens, Sr retired early from the coal business in the 1930s. He believed in and invested in what his sons did for sheer fun, sailing. As kids, Olin and Rod Stephens sailed every day, soaked up every little aspect of boats and racing and design. Later, when Olin left MIT due to an illness, he joined a yacht design firm. He was always a modest man, wearing a bow tie and suit. He never felt completely able with the mathematical side of designing, but he loved fast boats and had narrow lines in his imagination.

He once said he draws a line, then imagines how the water flows over that line. He taught himself out of Skene's *Elements of Yacht Design*, a very technical and mathematical instructional guide. I tried it once, it's impossible to learn from Skene without a teacher. But he sketched boats in great detail, standing nearby along docks and piers for hours.

If Herreshoff was an engineer, Olin Stephens was an artist. He saw the family yachts of the 1920s along Cape Cod. In those days yachting had several fine magazines to read and study. A young man could stare at the pages with lines and photographs, over and over, as Olin did. He said, "I started my career with the tools of observation and intuition to which quantitative analysis has been gradually added. Whenever possible, I studied lines and tried to see the way shape was coupled to performance."

By 1926 he was sailing around Larchmont Yacht Club in 6 meter boats, a specific class of around 34'. After working with the famous designer Philip Rhodes, he went in with an aggressive salesman, Drake Sparkman, to form Sparkman and Stephens.

In 1929 Roderick Stephens asked his son Olin to design a family boat. Olin once said he never liked a boat that wasn't fast, so he designed a light, narrow, deep keeled yawl he named *Dorade* (at 52', just the family boat). It was a 6 meter boat, stretched a few feet. But then sons are always shocking their fathers, so Olin announced he and his brother Rod would race *Dorade* in the 1931 Newport, Rhode Island, to England to ocean race against the big schooners and cutters of the day.

The schooners and cutters were twice the length of *Dorade*, with professional crews, 20 or 30 of them running around to trim the boat huge sails and wide sterns for sail power. *Dorade* and Olin Stephens had nothing like that, they should have finished last but they finished first, and by two days! When the yacht club crowd in England first saw the marconi mast of *Dorade* pierce the sea's far horizon, they must have spilled their brandy all over themselves. Not only did *Dorade* win by two days, but when the time was adjusted for the handicap rules, *Dorade* had won by four days. In 1930 this was not supposed to be possible.

*Dorade* was light, with steam bent frames rather than the broad sawn frames of the bigger, beamier schooners and cutters of the 1930s. Olin had drawn 52' of sleek speed. It cost \$28,000 in 1930. The yawl rig enabled the Stephens to raise plenty of sail without the peaks being very high. In fact, the rig originally was higher than it shows in pictures because Olin lowered the mainsail without any loss of speed. What the yawl rig could do was add mizzen jibs, a huge main jib and a spinnaker.

Racers later on would find out how perfectly Rod Stephens could raise a spinnaker

## Dorade

By Paul Austin

Reprinted from *Duckworks Magazine*



*Dorade* in 1931 following her upset win in the Trans Atlantic of that year.

and trim it, in just a few minutes. Ship design experts would also learn that having five sails up in an ocean race didn't just drive the hull, these sails balanced the ship.

The young handsome boys with their friends as crew not only had a grand time sailing to England and back to New York, but they had a parade down Wall Street over their victory. They met the famous politicians and Broadway stars.



But the story does not end in 1931. The next year *Dorade* won the Bermuda Race and the Fastnet Race. Now this same *Dorade*, over 80 years later, having passed through many hands and two oceans, has recently won the 2013 Transpac Race as overall winner. This is amazing, somewhat like a 60 year old man setting the mile record in track.

*Dorade* winning the 3013 Trans Pac.



Her entry is long and lean, slicing the water until the midsection turns where the crew will spend their time. Film of *Dorade* sailing shows the crew enjoying themselves most of the time. They often didn't wear flotation devices or safety lines as *Dorade's* hull sails so gently most of the time.

Her current owners, Matt Brooks and Pam Levy, intend to enter her in the races *Dorade* won before WWII.

## Encountering *Dorade*

By Dan Rogers

Paul Austin's article on *Dorade*, in the 18 April 2014 issue of *Duckworks Magazine*, reminded me of a time I saw that venerable lady. I admit that I was a bit star struck at the time. Nobody else seemed to know what I was jabbering about. Somehow "...but, that's D-O-R-A-D-E" just didn't strike any particular note with the folks aboard my own boat. Anyhow, it was a memorable event with a completely unexpected ending.

Time dulls the sense of date and season for me but, as I recall it was pretty nice weather, and in Seattle, so it had to be that day they call "summer" up thataway. Many women of my acquaintance seem to bracket dates in their past with recollection of whichever boyfriend or husband they might have had at the time. Guys usually remember what car they had. Or, better, what boat they had.

It must have been about 1975. We were aboard my first Ranger 26, *Velvet Turtle*, heading west, or seaward, through the Hiram Chittenden locks that connect Lakes Washington and Union via the ship canal to the giant estuary known generally as Puget Sound. It must have been some sort of holiday period because we were sandwiched into the large lock with scads of other pleasure boats. When I say large lock, I mean REALLY BIG. The drill was to get the larger craft along the walls and raft the progressively smaller boats toward the middle. Pretty routine, with a few variables.

My own boat had a rather unfriendly motor control system. Basically, I had to lie facing aft across the mainsheet traveler and grasp the shift with one hand and the throttle with the other on an ailing 9.9hp Chrysler outboard. There was a certain amount of voodoo involved in these contortions with the choke and recoil starter. This meant that I was facing the wrong way and steering with my shins and feet, which were facing the "right way." So going into and out of tight maneuvers and crowded places took a certain amount of alacrity.

As I recall, we were settled into the lock about midway outboard of several layers of boats. It helps to have people along to adjust fenders and handle lines to both port and starboard. And there are the inevitable tangled fenders, hooked BBQs and fouled dinghies that can cause problems on the jack rabbit start required to leave against a stiff current. But I'm getting ahead of my story a bit.

*Dorade* was in the echelon ahead of my particular raft up, one boat outboard from the wall. Her 50' of wooden hull seemed rather dainty and, well, old fashioned to this product of the golden age of fiberglass sailboats. I guess she was only about 45 years old then but, at the time, a relic of a long gone era. Nonetheless, amid the jostling and juggling needed to keep things seamanlike aboard *Velvet Turtle*, I certainly took time to steal a glance over that way now and then.



When the far gate is opened the water levels are not yet quite equilibrated. In fact, a small tsunami is generated inside that concrete canyon. All boats must have their engines running ahead and meet the surge with as little upset as possible. So I would have been lying prone, facing the "wrong way," peering back over a shoulder at the scene ahead. The idea is to drop our lines and roar out on command from the dock worker high on the wall above. But we weren't moving yet, much like a stop and go commute on the freeway. I scrambled up to see what was the holdup.

*Dorade* had a modest sized party of folks on deck. She had "steam up" and was attempting to get underway from her raft up with a large flush deck motor yacht. The skipper had his bow angling off to port as it was caught by the current. Like all of us in similar situations, he was adding revs to counter what he thought was simply the effects of current against his bow. The real cause was only apparent to those in the lineups astern. *Dorade* still had a quarter line made fast to the motor yacht.

The gang of folks sitting and standing about the decks were much too much into the party mood, apparently, to be paying any attention to what was transpiring. I may have been one of the unlucky few to see the entire train wreck happen and, like most train wrecks, it plays in slow motion to this day.

By the time *Dorade* had swung past 45° to the intruding current, the skipper had his engine running flat out, rudder hard over, still unaware of the quarter line. Like the Caped Crusader, a crewman from the motor yacht sprang from the galley wearing a chef's hat and brandishing a meat cleaver! I'm still dumbstruck when I realize how this drama played out. If only.

Well, the chef parted that line like he was preparing medallions of beef bourguignon. *Dorade* was running at full ahead. Sadly, she was also pointed straight ACROSS the lock. In a split second she buried her bow into the ribs and planking of a modest sized wooden power boat. I remember seeing the stemhead splinter and the forestay part. The sound of planks and ribs cracking and crunching simply makes me flinch to this day.

By then the lock keeper was insisting that all my echelon skeedaddle out of his lock chamber so he could deal with the collision just happened. I never saw her again. Until Paul Austin told us about her win in the Transpac, yet another 35 years hence. What a happy ending to my sad story.

## Ships That Pass

By C. Fox Smith  
The Sphere, November 24, 1919, England

There are ships that pass in the night-time, some poet has told us how,  
But a ship that passed in the day-time is the one I am thinking of now.  
Where the seas roll green from the Arctic, and the wind comes keen from the Pole.

"Tween Rockall Bank and the Shetlands, up north on the long patrol,  
We sighted her one day early; the forenoon watch was begun.  
There was mist like wool on the water and a glimpse of a cold pale sun.

The rust of the years was upon her – she was weathered by many a gale  
And the flag of a Dago republic went up to her peak at our hail.

But I knew her – Lord God! I knew her, as how could I help but know  
The ship that I served my time on – no matter how long ago!  
I'd have climbed to her royals blindfolded. I'd known her spars in a crowd.  
Aloft and aloft, I knew her – brace and halliard and shroud –

From the scroll-work under her sternports to the paint on her figurehead  
And the shout "All hands," from the maindeck would tumble me up from the dead.

She moved like a queen on the water, with a grace that was hers of yore,  
The sun was on her shining canvas... what had she to do with war.  
With a world that is full of trouble and seas that are stained with crime?  
She came like a dream remembered dreamt once in a happier time.

She was youth and its sorrow that passes... the light and the loving, the joy...

The South and the small white cities and the carefree heart of a boy.  
The farewell flash of the Fastnet that will light you the wide world around.  
And the hoot of the tug at parting... and the song of the homeward bound.

The sun and the flying-fish weather... night and a fiddler's tune  
And palms and the warm maize-yellow of a low West Indian moon;  
Storms in the high South latitudes and the boom of a Trade-filled sail  
And the anchor watch in the tropics and the old Sou' Spainer's tale.

Was it the lap of the wave I heard or the chill wind's cry,  
Or a stave of a deep-sea chantey I knew in the years gone by?  
Was it the whine of the gear in the sheaves or the seagull's call,  
Or the ghost of my shipmates' voices tallying to the fall?  
I went through her papers duly (and no one, I hope, could see  
That a freight of the years departed was the cargo she bore for me!)  
I talked with the Dago captain while we searched her for contraband.

And... I longed for the grip of her wheel-spokes like a grip of a friend's right hand.

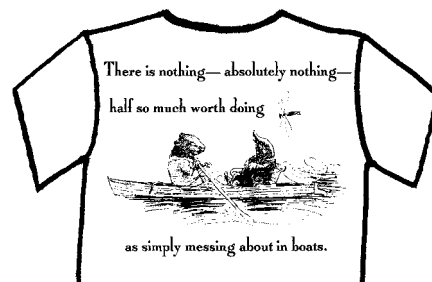
And I watched as her helm went over and the sails were sheeted home.

And under her moving forefoot the bubbles broke into foam.  
Till she faded from sight in the grayness, a thing of wonder and gleam,  
Hull down for the Past on a bowline, close-hauled in a wind of a dream.

(An Episode of the Cruiser Patrol during World War I. I found this narrative poem among some materials kept by my Dad. He was born in 1909, and in his day, men recited poetry and told stories for entertainment. It speaks of two ships passing at sea, one ship on patrol during WWI, the other a rusty old sailing vessel. Turns out, the guy conning the patrol boat had served his time in the old sailing vessel. Sad, but sweet, little story. Dad taught me some rhymes when I was a boy, I expect he would have performed it for all it was worth. It was a real pleasure to find this piece of Dad's repertoire, sad but sweet memory for me, too. Jim McKelvey, Newark, DE)



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What do you do when the hole through the bulkhead is not large enough for another set of wires? A neighbor ran into that problem when he wanted to string the wires from the solar panels he was installing on the top of his fixed frame dodger to the charging panel inside the boat. He already had a radar antenna mounted on the framework and wanted to string the two additional wires along where the radar wires ran. The problem was that the person who installed the radar wiring made a hole in one bulkhead only large enough to take the two wires for the radar unit. There was not room for two more wires to pass through the bulkhead. And, being in the confined area of the transom, there was not room for an electric saber saw with a hacksaw blade. The suggestion of cutting around the existing wiring with a manual hacksaw blade was not met with great enthusiasm. The other idea was to drill a second hole beside the first hole and round out the shape with a file. That idea was tried and it worked. All the wires run down the inside of the dodger bracing and into the boat though the modified hole in the bulkhead.

The engine has failed. Now what? Another neighbor had that problem with the outboard on his sailboat. He sailed the boat in as far as he could, then got out his sculling oar for the rest of the journey. I have seen



## From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

small boats being moved with a sculling oar, but watching a 26' sailboat being propelled right along with a sculling oar at the stern was a sight. Granted, he was in a canal at that point so there was no wave action, but he still had to contend with the wind on the bow when the boat was turned into the side canal to go to the float where the boat was kept.

I saw an article in a professional boating magazine on a new way to clean the bottom of large commercial hulls using a remotely controlled device to do the cleaning. The approach is supposed to be faster, less expensive and safer than sending divers down to do the work. I wondered about such equipment to clean smaller boats and then saw an advertisement for one for boats in the 30'-40' range. Nothing yet for my 26' powerboat, but who knows what tomorrow will bring. Perhaps one of these days we can sit on the dock while the boat's bottom is cleaned and may only need a diver to check out the "tight" places around the skeg and propeller?

Need some small anchors for racing marks or other such temporary mooring float? A simple and inexpensive solution is some empty plastic gallon jugs (milk, water or bleach type) with an outside handle. Cut away around the spout and leave the handle. Mix up some concrete and pour the mix into the container. Stick in a galvanized "eye" bolt with nut and large washer and add the rest of the concrete with the "eye" sticking out of the mix. Let set and then use. The "eye" bolt provides a place to secure the line, the outside handle helps picking the container up easily and the plastic container both protects the boat and helps contain the concrete. If a little more weight is needed for the mark (or whatever) chain two of the containers together

and secure the mooring line where the chain is connected to itself.

The fuel system on my boat runs from the tanks to a manifold, that allows me to select which tank to draw the fuel from and which tank for the return from the engine (it is a diesel and more fuel is drawn to the injector pump than is needed). This arrangement permits balancing the fuel level in both tanks. Working with diesel fuel lines calls for a special type of wrench called a flare nut wrench. It is sort of an open end box wrench with the opening designed to allow slipping the wrench around the fuel line to get at the nut so the flare nut can be tightened without damaging the corners of the nut. These wrenches can be used on other nuts, but "standard" open end wrenches do not work well on flare nuts in some locations on the engine.

Another type of manifold found on some boats is called a "sea chest," which is different from the wood/metal container used by sailors to store clothing and the like. This sea chest is like a reverse dual tank fuel manifold with one water intake point in the hull and a number of lines carrying the raw water to various locations in the boat. The advantage of this approach is that it reduces the number of holes in the hull. The disadvantage is that if something goes wrong at the sea chest, all raw water cooling for the boat is lost. The sea chest also may need inside baffles, if it is of any size, and some way to clean out the debris that will be collected along the way. One way is to have the inlet point with a cut-off valve, a strainer and then the sea chest. This cuts down on possible problems and a hose or two to keep raw water to the engine can be run if something goes wrong with the major distribution set up.

On a rather high tech note, we may soon have cell phone coverage wherever we go with no "dead zones" thanks to the work of Titan Aerospace who will be testing a solar powered drone aircraft that will fly at around 65,000 feet and provide tracking, GPS and communications capability. With its 50 meter wingspan, I am not sure how they will get the craft aloft. For more information on this concept/device, search parameter solar powered drone aircraft or Solara 50.

## Building Skin-on-Frame Double Paddle Canoes



HILARY RUSSELL

A valuable book for building any skin-on-frame canoe, kayak, or rowboat. Plus the chapter on using willow for ribs connects ancient techniques with modern materials and design.

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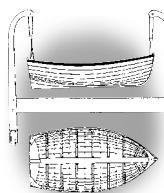
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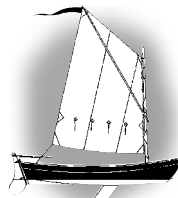
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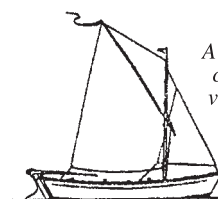


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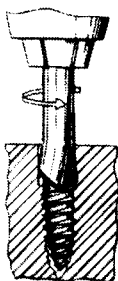
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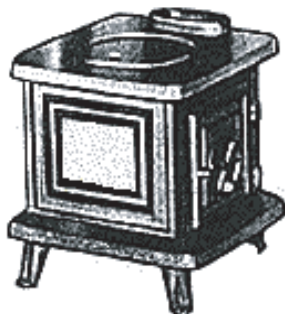
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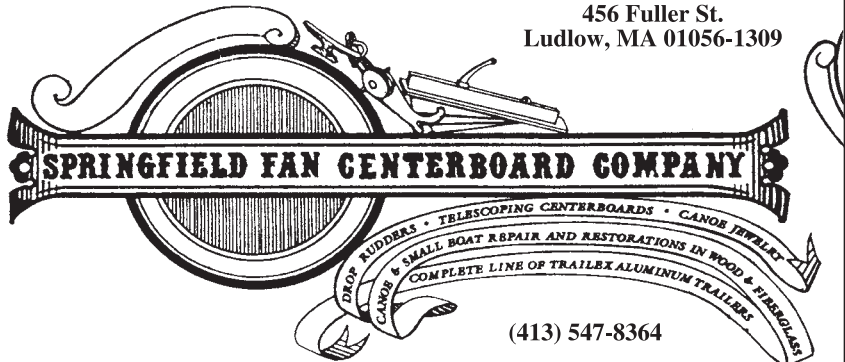
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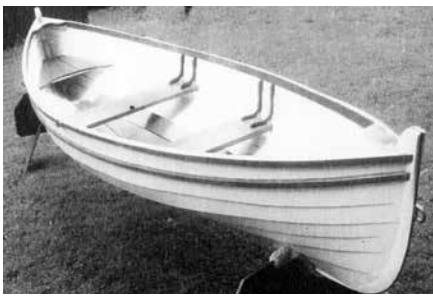
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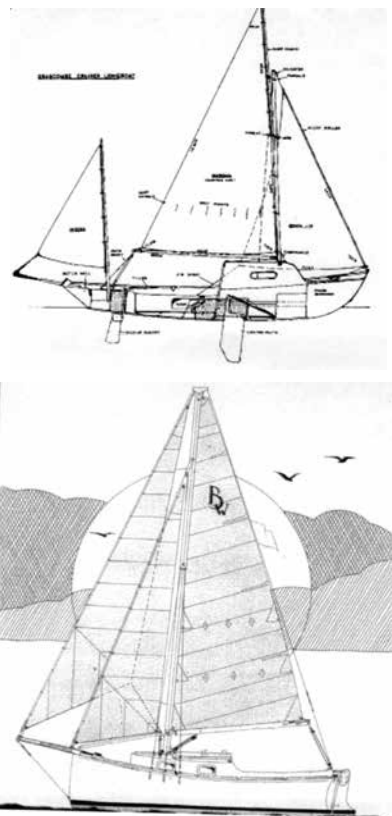
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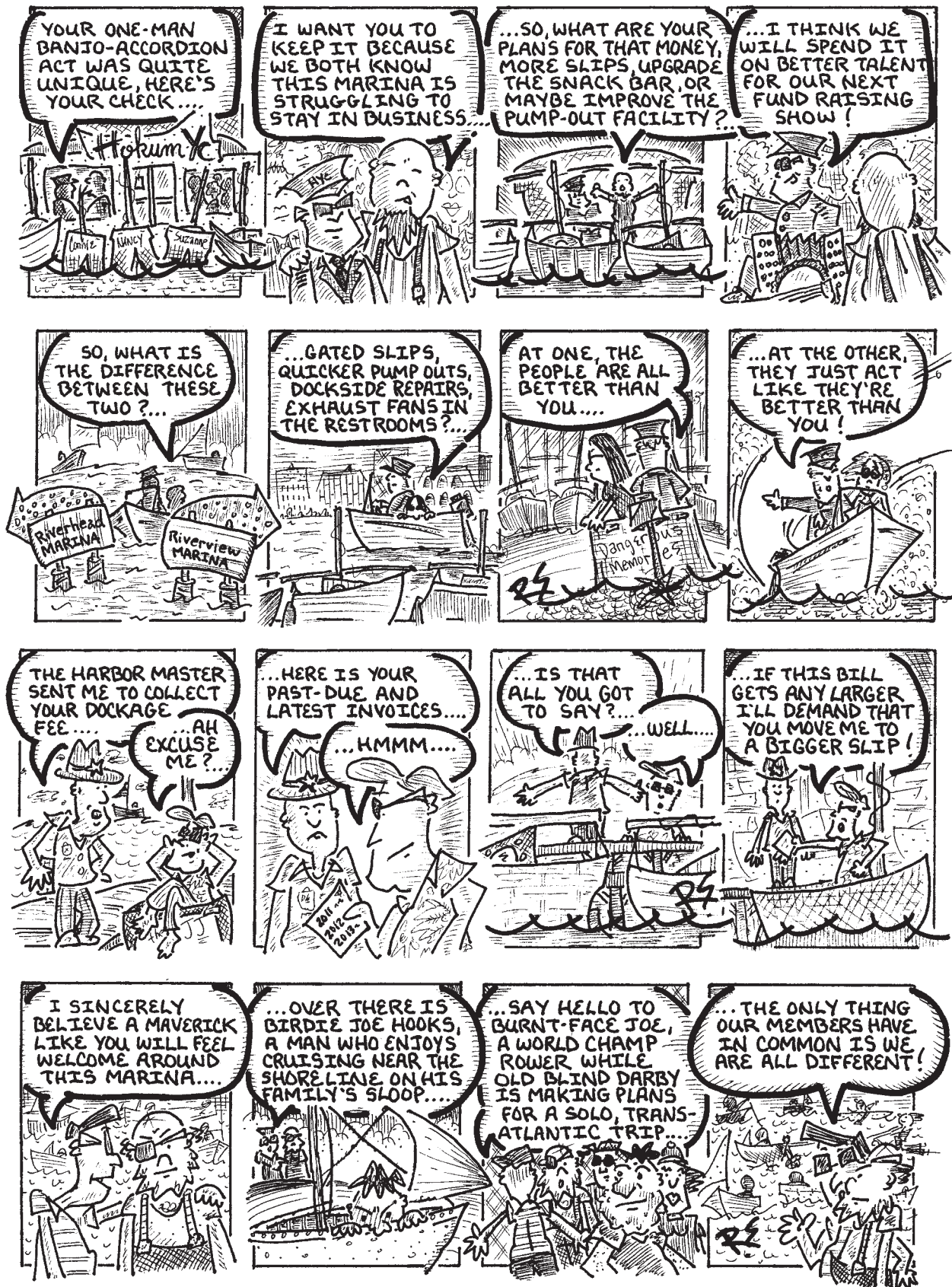
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## ADIRONDACK GUIDE-BOAT

### OUR 34 lb SOLO VERMONT PACK BOAT

A note from a customer: "I was finally able to get your new packboat in the water today. It floats with ease, rows like the wind, and the Spring Creek stabilizers are a perfect fit. The oars are nicely balanced, making rowing a cinch - slow speed, high speed - it all works well. We had massive gusts in Maine today - up to 50, so I chose the north end of a long pond that was sheltered, but when the gusts came cascading down the hill and hit the water, they whammed me pretty hard. Yet, having so low a profile, the boat held steady. The stabilizers helped, acting like a centerboard. All in all, beyond my expectations. Tomorrow I take it into the hills to a remote pond, using the wheels for the first time, putting it to the first hiking/fishing test. But given the stability, light weight, and maneuverability, I'd say we have a winner on our hands. Will follow up in a day. Great job, guys, worth every penny." Chris Webber



### UPCOMING SHOWS

May 24-6 Woodstock/New Paltz Craftshow  
Jun 13-5 Saratoga Balloon Festival, Greenfield NY  
Jun 27-9 Wooden Boat Festival, Mystic, CT  
Aug 8-10 Maine Boats & Harbors, Rockland, ME

[www.adirondack-guide-boat.com](http://www.adirondack-guide-boat.com)  
[guideboat@together.net](mailto:guideboat@together.net)

(802) 425-3926  
6821 Rt 7, N Ferrisburgh VT 05473